HISTORY OF
THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR RIFLES

Volume I

The State Force Background

Major (Retd) K Brahma Singh
M.A , M Phil

The Jammu and Kashmir Rifles Regimental Centre
JABALPUR (MP)-482001.

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P R E F A C E

Although the official history of the Jammu and Kashmir Rifles had been published in the form of Jammu and Kashmir Arms by Major General D K Palit Vr C in 1972, the need for producing a comprehensive history based on a systematic and thorough research continued to be felt in Regimental circles. These feelings were translated into action in 1981 when it was finally decided to have the history re-written on the basis of proper research. It was also decided that in order to provide a proper background to the history of the Regiment, the research on the pre-independence period should cover the State ~~army~~ Force as a whole and not merely the infantry component which ultimately formed the Jammu and Kashmir Regiment. It is a matter of great honour for me to have been selected by the Regiment for this great task.

The research covering a period of over 135 years proved to be a very challenging task but considering the great mass of historical facts that has been brought to light, the work has been rewarding. Besides the satisfaction that any research scholar would have in being able to dig so deep into the past, I, being both an officer of the Regiment as well as a native of Jammu, have had the added gratification of being able to write about the glorious deeds of people who are my ancestors- figuratively and literally.

The State Archives being totally deficient with regard to records pertaining to the State Army under ~~the earlier~~ Maharajas, Gulab Singh and Ranbir Singh, most of the material for this period had to be searched out of the National Archives at New Delhi. Some such material which has already been used by the Army Headquarters in India for producing the Ladakh and Kashmir Gazetteer in 1890 has of course been taken directly from the published source rather than the original. The records pertaining to the army under Maharajas Partap

Singh and Hari Singh were found to be in fairly good order at the Jammu Repository and these have been made good use of through the cooperation extended by the staff, particularly the Suprintendent Shri B.M. Sharma and the dealing assistant Shri Amar Nath. Unfortunat-ely a fire in the Repository a few years back has taken a heavy todl of the military record and many important documents listed in the index could not be traced despite the best efforts of Shri Amar Nath. The Regiment stands to loss on this account. Some impediment was caused by the restrictions imposed by the State Government on consulting of records pertaining to the year 1947 and beyond. Fortunately through the kind courtesy of Lieut Colonel Maluk Singh (retd) I was able to lay my hands on the draft history of the Regiment prepared by Lieut Colonel Mohan Singh Pathania way back in 1963 or so under the directions of the then Colonel of the Regiment, Lieut General A S Katoch MC. While this draft is well written as a whole, the portion dealing with the part played by the State troops in the J&K Operations in 1947-48 is particularly so. Evidently this account, so detailed and vivid, has been based on the situtation reports and war diaries of the period, duly supplemented by details provided directly by officers and men who actually took part in the various actions so narrated. The availability of this document, therefore, obviated the need for me to delve further into the original record; so well preserved and zealously guarded at the State Repository. With most of the officers and men who made this history, still living in Jammu and villages around, it was not difficult to recheck, delete or add to the existing information, where necessary, through personal contact.

While providing the necessary political backdrop to military activities in the State, every effort has been made to keep clear of controversies. What may still appear to be politically

controversial in this book is, infact, only a deviation from some popular beliefs which have been put in circulation, by those who were in a position to do so, for ulterior political motives, Though these beliefs have no historical base, they have endured all these years because of the difficulty in getting to the true facts, created by the government ban (both at the State and Centre level) on the consultation of official records pertaining to political activity in the State from 1925 onwards. With the primary source so blocked, politicians writing in the garb of historians had a hey day; writing history the way they wished it to be. Fortunately with the publication of Sardar Patel Correspondence by Navajivan Publishing House Ahmedabad in 1971 an authentic source of history is now available for political events that occurred in Kashmir between 1946 and 1950. This source, mainly, forms the basis for the political commentries for this period. For the earlier period starting from 1925 the political back drop is based on my own research on the subject, from sources that did not come under the perview of the official ban, which ultimately earned me the ~~Master~~ Doctor of Philosophy degree in History.

The number of retired officers of the Ex State Force who assisted me in this work is too large for all of them to be listed here. While the assistance received from these officers is generally, but gratefully, acknowledged, special thanks are due to officers who made available their personal notes and diaries for supplementing information contained in official records. Among these are Brigadier Ghansar Singh, Late Brigadier Krishna Singh, Brigadier N S Rawat, Lieut Colonel Bhagwan Singh, Lieut Colonel Malik Singh, Lieut Colonel Puran Singh Sambyal Lieut Colonel Kripal Singh Lieut Colonel B S Datta, Lieut Colonel Sewa Nath, Lieut Colonel Lieut Colonel Kachhpal Singh Harman Singh Mankotia, Major Ajit Singh VrC, Lieut Colonel P N Kak and Lieut Colonel Roshnak Singh Jamwal. I am also grateful to Lieut Colonel Puran Singh Sumbria for making available the notes of his father, late Brigadier Chattar Singh, and to Lieut Colonel SunitSingh

Pathania for his notes on the gallant action of his father-in-law, late Brigadier Rajinder Singh MVC, which he has so painstakingly prepared by interviewing various officers and men who formed part of the Brigadier's small band of brave soldiers. Among the serving officers, thanks are due to Lieut Colonel SS Salaria for having found time for going through the draft and offering some valuable suggestions, ~~and to Brigadier SS Chandel for~~

I take this opportunity to express my grateful thanks to Lieut General GS Rawat PVSM, AVSM, ADC the former Colonel of the Jammu and Kashmir Rifles for not only bearing with me so long, but also for the great personal interest he took in the writing of this book by providing me, through his own sources, valuable material, including some rare photographs.

Finally I thank Major General RK Sood, the Colonel of the Regiment for the support and cooperation extended to me during the last stages of production of this work.

K SHARMA SINGH

Jammu
March 1986

INTRODUCTION

The origin of the army of Dogra Raja Gulab Singh, the forerunners of the present day Jammu and Kashmir Rifles of the Indian army, dates back to 1820, when Gulab Singh was granted the Jammu territory as a Jagir by Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Punjab. Its subsequent development upto 1846 is intimately connected with the history of Dogra conquests during the period. Indeed the Dogra army during the first twenty five years or so of its existence was completely oriented towards the fulfilment of the territorial ambitions of the Jammu Raja. By 1934 the army had put the Raja firmly in the saddle in Jammu and between 1934 and 1940 Ladakh and Baltistan had been annexed to the Jammu Raj. The conquest of Ladakh and Baltistan which entailed operations in arctic cold and advance over hundreds of miles of treacherous terrain, far away from the base, speaks volumes for Dogra generalship and the courage, endurance and dedication of the Dogra soldiery. Continuing his run of conquests General ZoraWar Singh led the Dogra army into Western Tibet and in a splendid feat of arms conquered some 550 square miles of Tibetan territory in just about three and a half months. Unfortunately the Dogra army could not hold on to its conquest during the winter when the Tibetans counter-attacked with Chinese help. In fact the entire invading force was ~~anhilated~~ annihilated and the Dogras lost their greatest general. That ZoraWar Singh had miscalculated the odds against him, and bit much more than he could chew, does not go to his discredit any more than it went to Nepolean who invaded Russia in 1812 or to Hilter the master strategician who repleated Napolean's feat in 1943. Much of the Dogra esteem as soldiers was retrieved, nonetheless, when Wazir Ratnu and Dewan Hari Chand led a large Dogra army to Leh and evicted from there the Tibetan army that had in conjunction with the Ladakhi rebels occupied it after the Dogra debacle in Western Tibet.

Not only did the Dogras evit the Tibetans from Leh but also persued them to the border, and decisively defeated a large Sino-Tibetan force that had occupied a strong defensive postition on their own side of the border. The peace treaty that was signed by the representatives of the Chinese Emperor, the Maharaja of Punjab, and the Raja of Jammu, ushered in an era of peace and amity on the borders of Ladakh which was to last for the next hundred years and more of Dogra rule.

In 1846 Kashmir and Gilgit were added to the territories of Raja Gulab Singh by virtue of the Treaty of Amritsar, to form the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The territories comprising the new State could now be divided into four geographical divisions. First the sub montane and semi mountainous tract, consisting of the small strip of fertile land along the border of Jammu, (which in fact is a continuation of the great plains of the Punjab), and the broken arid 'Kandi' country to its north, skirting the Himalayan ranges. Second the outer hills consisting of comparatively low hills to the south of the mountain ranges which form the dividing line between Kashmir and Jammu. The altitude of the greater part of this belt varies from 2000 to 4000 feet above sea level, though the hills in Bhadarwah reach heights of over 5000 feet. This geographical division along with the first formed the Jammu Province of the State. The third geographical division covered the Jehlam (Jhelum) valley consisting of valleys that drain into the Jehlam (Jhelum) and the Krishna ganga rivers, and the lateral valleys of the Sindh and Liddar rivers; the three together forming the famous Kashmir valley. Also included in this division (which politically constituted the Kashmir province) was the hilly track of Muzaffarabad. The mountains enclosing this area have an average altitude of 12000 feet above sea level while many of the peaks are above 14000 feet. The fourth division included the Tibetan and semi Tibetan tract consisting of the middle reaches of the Indus river. The river which has its source in Lake Manasarovar in Tibet traverses the whole of the division running from south-east up to the

bend round Naga Parbat from where it takes a south-westerly direction. The mountains in the north stretch upto the Pamirs and reach great heights; one of the peak, Mt. Godwin Austin soaring to 28250 feet above sea level, to become the second highest peak in the world. Politically the region comprised of the district of Gilgit and the frontier 'illaqas' of Ladakh, Skardu and Kargil. Except in Gilgit which is comparatively low lying, the ranges in this division vary between 17000 and 22000 feet. The cultivable area in Ladakh is very small and rain fall too little for agriculture. The small tract of Gilgit, however, enjoys good climate and the land is suitable for cultivation of crops and fruits. The population in both Gilgit and Ladakh is very sparse.

The major part of the State being mountainous the means of communication within the State were poor. Roads were non existant and the various regions were connected with each other only through foot paths and mule tracks over high passes that remained covered with snow for the most part of the year. During the next hundred years of the Dogra rules, the country did get opened up but because of high cost of road construction in mountainous areas the pace of development remained slow. In fact military operations even at the end of the Dogra rule in 1947 remained considerably handicapped by lack of roads and tracks. Added to this was the climatic conditions under which the troops had to operate in the performance of their role; varying from the arctic cold of Ladakh and Gilgit to the extreme heat of the plains of Jammu.

The total area of the Jammu and Kashmir State was about 84,471 square miles which made it the largest princely state in India. But besides the significance of its size, the newly created state acquired great strategic importance because of the extent of its boundaries. On the north it was bounded by the Chinese and Russian Turkistan, on the east by Tibet, on the south by Punjab and on the west by the North West Frontier Province of India.

The territories of three powers viz. Britain, China and Russia, and of the independent kingdom of Afghanistan met on the northern of the borders of the State. The security of the northern border, therefore became more of a British interest than that of the Maharaja. However, being too occupied in consolidating their position in India after the Mutiny, and with Maharaja Gulab Singh zealously guarding his independence the British did not pay much attention to the region till 1870 when they began to guide Maharaja Ranbir Singh's policies for securing their own interests.

Between 1846 and 1870 the Dogra Maharajas, having been left to themselves, busied themselves with the consolidation of their gains resulting from the Treaty of Amritsar and in this regard they had plenty to do. Even the transfer of Kashmir from Punjab to Maharaja Gulab Singh had not been peaceful. While Kashmir ~~and it~~ had to be occupied by force of arms, ~~and~~ while Gilgit which came to Gulab Singh along with Kashmir had to be defended against repeated attacks of Ganhar Rehman, the ruler of Punjab and Yasin, the boundaries of which touched that of Gilgit. In fact the territory changed hands between the Dogra and Ganhar Rehman three times before the Dogras could finally establish themselves in Gilgit in 1860. Even after this the Gilgit frontier remained disturbed due to hostile activities of neighbouring tribes of Ghilas, Punial, Darel, Yasin and Chitral; necessitating a number of expeditions against them. All this gave a rather busy time to the 26000 strong state army.

In addition to its commitments in Gilgit, the army had to fulfil the Maharaja's obligations under the Treaty ~~to assist~~ towards the British in their cause in India. It was thus that, even as the army was occupied with affairs on the States northern border, it had to provide contingents in support of the British; first during the Sikh insurgency in 1849, then against the Mutineers in 1857, for the Second Black Mountain Expedition in 1868, in aid of the British during the Second

Afghan War 1878 and for the Third Black Mountain Expedition in 1888.

By 1870 the British had sensed a threat to their Indian Empire from Russia. Consequently they began to take keener interest in matter connected with the security of the Gilgit frontier. With a view to ensure stability on the northern border of the State, the Maharaja was advised to mediate between the Thams of Hunza and Nagar whose long lashing feuds had been a constant source of disturbance. The Maharaja was also advised to pay a regular subsidy to the Mehtar of Chitral in return for peace and tranquility on the Gilgit border. The Maharaja's interests in Gilgit having now been identified with the Imperial interests, the British offered to help in the modernisation of the State army. As a first step in 1877, 4000 Enfield and 1000 Snider rifles were presented to the State to replace the out dated and out moded 'Dharmars' (muzzle loaders). Along with the rifles the British also presented to the State four rifled 7 pounder guns. Arrangements were then made for the training of a number of non commissioned officer of the State army with the units of the Indian Army. The Maharaja respon-ded to British offers most enthusiastically by ordering the complete re reorganisation of his 30,000 strong army with the aim of making it more weildy and better suited for employment in modern warfare.

The death of Maharja Ranbir Singh and the succession of his son Pratap Singh to the 'Rajgi' in 1885 coincided with the Panjdeh incident on the Afghan border which brought Britain and Russia to the brink of a war. Although the incident passed off peacefully, the British got alerted on a possible threat to India from Russia. They got involved in hectic activity connected with defence arrangements against a possible Russian invasion. They got particularly worried about the security of the Gilgit region and determined to take over the responsibility for its defence; using the Maharaja only for providing the necessary troops and bearing, in the main, the heavy

expenditure that would be involved. To eliminate the possibility of obstruction from the new Maharaja, he was issued with a show cause notice for gross inefficiency even as he was celebrating his Raj Tilak and three years later he was deposed on a trumped-up charge of conspiring with Russia against the British. That was the time when as a general policy of creating a second line reserve of troops in India (as part of the arrangement for meeting the Russian threat), was formulated and troops from the forces of all the major princely states of India were earmarked for Imperial Service. With six infantry battalions, two mountain batteries and a squadron of Cavalry forming part of the Kashmir Imperial Service Corps the State had provided the biggest contingent for British Imperial service. The State was expected to keep its Imperial Service troops to be well armed, fed, and equipped and paid better than the remaining troops that were termed as 'Regulars'. Their training was to be supervised by British Officers deputed for the purpose. They were orgainsed into two brigades of three battalions and a mountain battery each; one of them being located in Gilgit and the other at Jammu for providing the necessary relief every two years. The maintenance of the Imperial Service troops at the required level of efficiency was bound to be a costly affair and in order to keep the defence budget within tolerable limits reduction in the over-all strength of the State army became necessary. The strength of the State army which stood at 22,398 at the end of 1888 was slashed to first 8955 all ranks in 1890, of which 4904 comprised the Imperial Service Corps and the remainder the 'Regulars'. Such large scale reductions created a big human problem which was tackl-ed with great tact and sympathy by the Commander-in-Chief Raja Ram Singh and the concerned State Officers.

The Imperial Service troops were first tested in action in 1891 when in conjunction with some Indian Army troops, they took part in

the Hunza- Nagar Campaign conducted by the Political Agent in Gilgit to chastise the tribals of the two principalities. The Gazatte of India, which gives details of the campaign, is full of praise for the Ist Kashmir Infantry (Raghupratap) and 2nd Kashmir Rifles (Body Guard that took part in the operation. Evidently the performance of the two Battalions far exceeded British expectations and they, probably, patted themselves for having thought of creating the Imperial Service Corps. There after the 2nd Body Guard went on to win laurels at Chilas in 1893, while the 4th Raghunath distinguished itself during the long seige of Chitral in 1895.

With the situation on the borders stabilising and the threat from Russia receeding, the Kashmir Imperial Service Corps suffered successive cuts in its strength till it was reduced to just three battalions and two mountain batteries in 1907. The 3rd Battalion having been disbanded by then, along with the 5th and the 6th, the 4th Raghunath was renumbered as the 3rd Raghunath. Henceforth only one infantry battalion and a mountain battery garrisoned the various posts on the Gilgit frontier.

During the Great War of 1914-19, the Kashmir Imperial Service Corps added yet another glorious chapter to its history. One complete battalion, the 2nd Body Guard and half of 3rd Raghunath that formed part of the British Expeditionary Force made a name for themselves in the very first action in East Africa and were catagorised as the most reliable troops of the Force by the General Officer Commanding in his confidential despatches to the War Office London. Later they formed part of the front line troops of General Smutts force that advanced into German East Africa. During the 2½ years of active service in East Africa, the strength of the Kashmir Rifles got greatly decimated due to disease and battle casualties and the General Officer Commanding Expeditionary Force was prevailed upon by the commander-in-

Chief India to permit their return to the State. The Ist Battalion (Raghupratap) was then dispatched for operations in Egypt and Palestine. Closely at its heals followed the rejuvinated 3rd Raghunath for operations in the same theatre. Two troops of Kashmir Lancers attached, one each, to the Mysore and Patiala Lancers also saw action in Palestine. All the State troops in Palestine were used as first line troops and at the end of the war they all returned to the State after having won fresh honours for themselves and the State.

In the period intervening the two World Wars the State army underwent major reorganisation. In 1923 the distinction between the first line troops and the second line reserve was done away with and all battalions were reorganised as "Indian State Forces on Indian Army Establishment." As the 'Regulars' now stood as equals alongside the ex Imperial Service troops, the Fateh Shibji was renumbered as the 4th Battalion, the Suraj Gorkha as the 5th while the ~~Rudhar~~ Rudhar Shibnabh was disbanded to make up the strengths of the first two. Another battalion, the 6th, was raised as a Pioneer Battalion. The Kashmir Artillery was reorganised into three Pack batteries which were rearmed with 2.75 inch BL guns. The cavalry which thus far had been receiving a raw deal as far as its animals and equipment were concerned, was now given its due, and reorganised as a full fledged regiment. The scheme for the construction of a Cantonment in Srinagar was pushed through and the troops started moving into the beautiful Badami Bagh Cantonment in 1926. In 1932 one new battalion, the 7th, and a Training Battalion were raised. All units were designated as the Jammu and Kashmir units in 1932 as against Kashmir units earlier.

When the Second World War broke out the State Force was in the best state of readiness to take the field. While the Maharaja put his entire army at the disposal of the British, the latter

requisitioned the services of only one mountain battery and two infantry battalions for active participation in the War. One battery and two infantry battalions were held by them in reserve in the North West Frontier Province where they were trained but for whom no actual requirement for going to War arose. To meet the requirements of the War without jeopardising the security of the Gilgit frontier, two additional battalions, the 8th and the 9th were raised in 1940.

The 1st J&K Mountain Battery was the first to leave the State in 1939 and it proceeded to the Middle East in early 1940. Being the only mountain battery in the 5th Indian Division the 1st J&K Battery played a prominent role in the reduction of enemy defences in the hills at Keran and Ad Teclesan in Eritrea during the Division's advance on Asmara. Subsequently the Battery was shifted to the Syrian front to form part of the 6th British Division and took part in the fighting against the Vichy French at Jabal Mazar around Damascus. During its two years in the War the Battery earned wide acclaim for its actions from both the troops that it supported as well as the various formation commanders under whom it served. Besides, Major Bhagwan Singh, the Battery Commander earned the honour of being the first Indian State Forces Officer to Command a unit in war free of the usual British Special Service Officers (SSOs). The SSOs were ultimately removed from all State Force units in 1942 as a matter of general policy. Lieutenant Madan Lal of the Battery became the first State Force Officer to be awarded the Military Cross in 1940-41.

Among the infantry battalions that took an active part in the War was the 4th Fateh Shivji that moved to the Burma front in 1944. The Battalion had the honour of capturing the famous Kennedy Peak as part of the 5th Indian Division and in the race for the capture of Rangoon it was among the forward most troops of the Division which were just 20 miles short of the Burmese capital when it fell to the Allied

invasion from the sea. Besides the award of the OBE to the commanding officer Lieut Colonel Narain Singh Sambyal, one MBE, five MC, one OBI (Ist cl) nine Military Medals, one IDSM and twenty Mentions in Despatches formed the scintillating tally of awards made by the Battalion during the Burma Campaign.

The 2nd Body Guard under Lieut Col Khuda Buksh moved to Iran as part of the 'Pai' Force, also in 1944. Here it performed the Line of Communication protection duties. In 1945 it moved to Syria on role to prevent the French and Syrian nationalists from fighting with with each other; a task requring great tact and understanding.

By the time the various units returned to the State from their respective field areas the poltical situation in the State had vastly changed. Independence was on the anvil and the Muslim League in India was trying to establish its justification for demanding the partition of the country on the basis of communal disharmony. It was natural that the Muslim Majority State of Jammu and Kashmir which formed part of the proposed dominion of Pakistan should have received its utmost attention. The first phase of the Muslim League plan to create the necessary communal disharmony in the State was set in motion in 1945 itself when anti-government disturbances were started by their agents in Poonch- Mirpur area. Since 1932 one complete battalion used to be permanently located in Naoshera (which was termed as the Manoeuvre area) for the dual purpose of training and internal security. However during the war, because of large scale employment of troops outside the state, this battalion was also required to provide detachments for Bunji, Skardu and Ladakh, leaving not more than two companies for internal security in the Mirpur-Poonch area. As this strength was not enough to deal with the situation that had now been created, the 9th Battalion, that had just returned to Srinagar from the North West Frontier Province, was immediately

despatched to the area in October 1945 to restore law and order. Columns from the Jammu Brigade, (to which the 2nd and the 4th Battalions had been allotted after their return from abroad), had also to be despatched to Riasi, Rajauri, Bhadarwah and Kishtwar in November/December 1945 to prevent the agitation from spreading to these areas. In 1946 these disturbances developed pronounced communal over-tones, culminating at times into communal riots at various places. For better command and control over troops operating in the Mirpur-Poonch area they were organised into an Operational Brigade in March 1946, (which was ultimately designated as the Mirpur-Poonch Brigade) with its headquarters at Jhangar. By then about three battalions had been deployed in the area with plenty of work for each.

Kashmir remained quiet till May 1946 when the National Conference led by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah launched the "Quit Kashmir" movement against the Maharaja. However as the movement was neither supported by the Muslim League nor by the Indian National Congress, it was easily contained by the troops of the Kashmir Brigade as a matter of routine.

The "Direct Action" by the Indian Muslim League in August 1946 to force the British to accept its demand for a separate home land for the Muslims in India, created utter lawlessness in the Muslim majority provinces of India with varying degrees of loot, rapine, rioting murder and other conceivable forms of violence. Refugees from Punjab began pouring into the State in large numbers creating much tension and panic in the border areas of the State contiguous to the Punjab, right upto the end of 1946 and begining of 1947, which kept the troops of the newly formed Mirpur-Poonch Brigade extremely busy.

In March 1947, Lord Louis Mountbatten, the new Viceroy of India

was evidently impressed by the Muslim League's capacity to create trouble if its demands were not met and he announched the British plan for the partition of the country. The princes were given the option of either acceding to one of the two dominions that were to be formed or to become independent. For Maharaja Hari Singh the choice between his options was difficult. 75% of the States population was Muslim and a very large section was in favour of joining Pakistan. Those Muslims who were not for joining Pakistan were not necessarily for joining the Indian Dominion. Most of them wanted the State to remain independent of both the dominions. Personally the Maharaja was in favour of joining the Indian Union but the Indian leaders would not acceed to his request unless it was accompained by a similar request from Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah whom they considered as the sole representative of the people. With the Sheikh seeking transfer of power to him before he could decide which way to go and the Maharaja not being able to do so due to circumstances beyond his control the vicious circle was complete. Consequently the accession was delayed beyond 20 October 1947. For gaining time beyond 15 August the Maharaja ~~had signed~~ sought to enter into a Stand Still agreement with both the Dominions. While Pakistan accepted the offer and signed the Agreement, the Indian Union ~~did not~~ refused to do so.

Knowing that the Maharaja would not on his own ever opt for Pakistan, the Muslim league in India got busy in subverting the loyalty of the State's Muslims towards the Maharaja no sooner than the Viceroy announced the British intention of creating a separate home land for the Muslims in India. Agents were sent across the border into the Poonch and Mirpur areas clandestinely to incite the Muslims against the Hindus Maharaja which was followed by smuggling of arms into these areas for organising an armed revolt. These activities became blatant after Pakistan actually came into being. So much so that hundreads of serving personnel of the Pakistan Army belonging to these areas were

sent on leave with arms and ammunition, while they were officially shown as deserters, to organise an armed revolt. Preparations were also started for a large scale invasion of the State. By the end of September a large force of irregulars, stiffened by men and officers of the regular Pakistani army was collected all along the States border with Pakistan for the ultimate attack.

The State army was deployed all along the border to meet the Pakistani challenge but having to defend a border over 500 miles long, it had to be dispersed in penny packets, and even then not more than a battalion could be held in reserve at Srinagar. Besides the "faulty" deployment, the state army suffered from two other major handicaps which ultimately caused a very critical situation which was saved in the nick of time by the State's accession to the Indian Union. One was that the State army was dependent on arsenals which had now gone over to Pakistan and with the blockade imposed by Pakistan despite having signed the Stand Still agreement, the supply of war material to the State was cut. The Maharaja's efforts to procure arms, ammunition and other military were from the Indian Union proved futile inspite of the promises made by the Indian Home and Defence ministers. The second serious handicap was that the traditional loyalty of Muslim troops towards the Maharaja which had not wavered even during the great Muslim agitation of 1931-32 had now been subverted by Pakistani propaganda and therefore nearly 1/3 of the States troops could not have been relied upon. This in fact was the Armys "Achilles heel" which the Pakistani had planned to pierce to bring about its premature collapse.

Prior to the invasion of Kashmir the Pakistanis launched large scale attacks on all the State Force out-posts in Poonch on Ist October 1947 and along the Mirpur and Jammu border on the 6th with the intention of not only pinning down the troops on the border but also

of drawing the army reserve. They succeeded in both and when the invasion of the Valley was actually launched on 22 October, while no troops could be lifted from the border areas to meet the situation, the 8th Battalion which was held in reserve at Srinagar had already been rushed to augment the strength of the Poonch Brigade, which had coming into being immediately after the Pakistani attacks in Poonch. Their greatest success, however, lay in having won over the Muslim troops of the famous 4th Battalion who were guarding the Abbottabad- Muzaffarabad route of ingress. Forgetting their oath of loyalty to the Ruler over the Holy Quran the traitors joined hands with the raiders and killing their unsuspecting Hindu comrades-in-arms, led the enemy advance towards Srinagar.

With the reserve battalion already committed in the Poonch sector, there was now no organised unit at Badami Bagh Cantonment for meeting the Pakistani invasion. So while negotiations for the State's accession to the Indian Union were started by the Maharaja his Chief of the ~~Army~~ Military Staff Brigadier Rajindra Singh mustered about 200 men ~~from the odds and sods located~~ from those employed on odd duties in Srinagar and rushed out towards Domel to delay the enemy and gain the necessary time for the Indian Army to come in. Brigadier Rajinder Singh made contact with the raiders, some 6000 strong, a little short of Garhi and by occupying successive defensive positions between Garhi and Baramulla delayed the enemy for four crucial days to allow the Indian Army to reach Srinagar before the invaders could. Unfortunately Brigadier Rajindra Singh, who was awarded the first Maha Vir Chakra of free India, was ~~the~~ killed during an action a few miles a head of Baramulla. His little force which was reinforced around Baramulla by a company of the 4th Battalion from Titwal, however, remained in tact till relieved by a battalion of the Sikh Regiment. Srinagar was saved in the nick of time and the credit for this goes to Brigadier Rajindra Singh and his

small band of Dogras.

The take over of the defence of the State by the Indian Army did not immediately ease matters for the State Force units engaged in fighting in the Mirpur and Poonch sectors. For nearly a month after the arrival of the first Indian Army units in the State, the State troops continued to operate on their own without reinforcements or any improvement in the supply of rations and ammunition. All garrison of the Poonch Brigade continued to hold out against enemy attacks, continually launched since Ist October, till acute shortage of ammunition and food supplies forced them to withdraw and occupy a defensive position around the Poonch town in the middle of November 1947. Indian Army relief first came when 4 Kumaon was inducted into Poonch from Uri via the Haji Pir on 22 November. Air link between Poonch and Jammu was established by the end of December and the 3/9 Gorkha Rifles were flown in to augment the strength of the Poonch garrison. The State troops however continued to play a major role in the defense of Poonch right upto the Cease Fire on 1 January 1949. In Mirpur also Indian help took a long time in coming. Treachery by the Muslim component of the 2nd Body Guard of the kind suffered by the 4th Battalion, and acute shortage of ammunition compelled the State troops to give up a number of outposts but they continued to hold on even to their main positions at Mirpur, Kotli and Jhangar right upto 26th November despite the extreme privations that they were suffering. The 50 Para Brigade that was sent for their relief from Jammu arrived at Jhangar on 19 November but in the next seven days was not able to do any thing more than arrange evacuation of Kotli, and the Mirpur garrison that was already at its end was forced to vacate the town on 26 November without receiving help from the Indian Army.

In Gilgit, which was taken over by the State from the British on 1 August 1947, the Muslim company of the 6th Battalion instead of

assisting the State's Governor in containing the Gilgit Scouts, who had revolted under instigation of their British Officers, put him under arrest on 31 October 1947 and handed over Gilgit to Pakistan on a platter. The Sikh company and the headquarter of ~~its~~ the 6th Battalion at Bunji were then surrounded by the Gilgit Scouts and the Muslim elements of the Battalion, and all the Hindu/Sikh officers and men were taken prisoner. The Skardu garrison was then quickly reinforced with the Sikh company from Leh. It was further reinforced with a relief column (two adhoc companies of State troops) from Srinagar, which created history by crossing the Zojila in the dead of winter in January 1948; just in time to beat back the first enemy attack on 10/11 February. Unfortunately the increase in strength was greatly off set when during the defense a Muslim platoon deserted to the enemy with arms and ammunition after murdering an entire Sikh platoon in cold blood. While all subsequent attempts, both to reinforce the garrison as well as to supply it by air, proved abortive, the garrison stuck tenaciously to its defences against continuous enemy attacks for the next six months or so; enduring privations of the acutest form as it stretched its existing meagre means of subsistence and low stocks of ammunition to the extreme limit. With starvation staring in the face and ammunition exhausted the garrison was forced to surrender on 14 August 1948. Lieut Colonel Sher Jang Thapa who commanded the Skardu garrison during this period was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra for his grit, determination, and superb leadership.

Besides the wonderous tenacity in defence displayed by the State troops while fighting under the most crippling handicaps, their concern for the refugees, even as they were themselves engaged in a life and death struggle with a trecherous and unscruplous enemy, forms one of most outstanding feature of their over-all performance in the J&K operations. Never was an operation planned

which did not cater for the safety of the refugees. Indeed thousands of Hindus and Sikhs today owe their lives to the brave soldiers of the State Force.

Due to the isolation under which units and sub units of the State army were operating, many a deed of valour by the Officers and men, especially before the arrival of the Indian Army, went unnoticed and unrecognised. Even then the outstanding individual performances that got recognised by way of gallantry awards made an impressive tally. In all, the State Force earned two Maha Vir Chakra, nineteen Vir Chakra and fifty two Mentions in Despatches. The price that it had to pay for adding these laurels to the already outstanding record of the pre Independence period, was, however, breath taking; having suffered 1138 killed, including 19 State Officers and 38 Indian Officers (present day Junior Commissioned Officers) and 503 wounded which included 14 State Officers and 26 Indian Officers.

Who were the troops that wrote this glorious history of the Jammu and Kashmir State Force? The main constituent, for obvious reasons, has always been the Dogras; the term, in this case implying all those belonging to the Jammu region. The Dogras were further sub divided into the Hindu Dogra and the Muslim Dogra for determining the class composition of the various units which it was finally fixed around 1923. Among the Hindu Dogras the Rajputs (referred to as 'Mians' during the earlier years) dominated with the Brahmains following closely. Besides the tradition which made the Rajputs to join the State army in such large number, there also was the economic reason. The Rajputs belonged mainly to the arid, 'Kandi' area of Jammu (east of the Jammu-Pathankot road) where the land is unable to support its population. The main clans of Rajputs that filled the ranks were the Jamwal, Sambyal, Jasrotia, Pathania, Kotach, Chib, Langey etc. The Jamwals came from villages around Jammu (famous among which are Rajpur, Surha Salathia, Baguna, Sochani and Bareri) and Sambyals from Samba while the Chib and Langey belonged to the Deva- Batala area. Pathanias and Katoches were not many, having

entered service only after the Jammu Rajas/Maharajas married into these clans from Kangra. The Mahajans though falling under the catagory of Dogras were would not encouraged to join the Army, being considered non martial. The Muslim Dogras came mostly from the Mirpur Poonch area. The Mirpur-Poonch area was also a major recruiting ground for the Indian Army where the Mohammadan Dogra passed off as a Punjabi Mussalman. The many martial Muslim clans inhabiting the Jammu province were the Jaral, Chib, Salaria, Ghakkars, Awans, Sials etc. Ethnically they are Aryo-Scythians and descendents of Hindu (primarily Rajputs) converts to Islam. They naturally have the qualities of the Pathans and Rajputs from whom they have descended. All these clans were freely enroled in the State army. The other Muslim clans of Jammu were the Jats and Gujjar. From a representation made by them to the State Council in 1924, it appears that though there was no ban on their enrolment they were not being favoured by the recruiting officers. Considering the fact that some 600 Muslim Jats and ~~F~~ Gujjars had served satisfactorily in units during the Great War it was finally ruled by the Council that there be no restriction, official or unofficial on the enrolment of Jats and Gujjars in the State Army.

The Dogras as a fighting class need no introduction. During the earlier period of history, they have been referred to as the hill troops of Raja Gulab Singh, about whom the British spoke with great regard and admiration- be it while they were fighting for Bibi Chand Kaur at Lahore during the ~~Punjab~~ War of succession in Punjab or alongside the British ~~evidently felt~~ against the Afghans in 1842. Later in 1845-46 the British evidently felt much relieved on learning that they would not be fighting the hill troops of Raja Gulab Singh in their war with the Sikhs. Subsequently much has been written by the British on Dogras (to include both the Jammu as well as the Kangra Dogras) as a fighting class. The finest commentary has, however, been made in <u>All about the War</u> published by G. A. Natesan and Co from Madras in 1915. It is a long

commentry that can at best be reproduced here only in part. It reads:-

" The Dogras are among the best fighting material to be found in India. They have a keener sense of national pride and a higher feeling of national integrity than their compatriots of the plains. The pioneer Rajputs who were forced through discord at home (Rajastan) to seek a home in these hills, and founded the various principalities, became independent with the dissolution of the Mughal empire but subsequently became sunject to the Sikhs under Ranjit Singh. Gulab Singh whom the latter made the Raja of Jammu and who after his death became the ruler of Kashmir was a Dogra by race. Although Dogras distinguished themselves as soldiers under the various rulers of Kangra and Nurpur, it was Gulab Singh who raised their prestige to the pinnacles of glory.

" The Dogra is shy reserved man, with considerable strength of character. 'He may not be so brilliant as the Pathan, nor so tenacious and subtle as the Gorkha, but he has a high idea of honour, is very self respecting and makes a capital solider'. His physique is not so fine as that of the Pathan or the Sikh. They have been long known as brave and faithful soliders and loyalty to their salt is with them as the breath of their nostrils. Though shy and reserve they are not lacking in the force of character. More solid than brilliant, they are full of quiet and resolute courage when face to face with danger... ..... Law abiding and well behaved, steady and resolute, though not showy of courage, their virtues shine forth in moments of peril when they will face certain death with a calm and determination to do before they die".

The commentry was written many years back but on going through the history of the J&K State Force one would find that nothing has

changed as far as the soldierly qualities of the Dogras are concerned and their virtues, as enumerated above, shone forth as brilliantly between 1915 and 1957 as they did before that.

Among the other communities of the State that were enrolled in the army were the war like Khakhas and Rambas (both Muslims) of the Muzaffarbad district. There was no restriction on the enrolment of "Bhuttas" of Gilgit but very few came forward to enlist due to their problem of serving in the heat of the plains of Jammu. The few that joined opted for the artillery units whose tenures in Gilgit were the longest. The Bhuttas besides making good soldiers proved to be good sportsmen. During the earlier years of Maharaja Gulab Singh's reign, a few hundred Baltis seem to have been enlisted in the army to form a Balti regiment for which was adopted the Highland kilt and a head dress " that must have been taken from some picture of grenadiers of two centuries and a half back". The Kashmiris (both the Hindus as well as the Muslims) were not considered for enlistment as combatants, being "non martial". The ban was lifted after independence and in 1951 the community was given representation in the 7th J&K Infantry.

Evidently the martial communities within the State were not enough to meet the demand of the State Force, especially during Maharaja Gulab Singh's and his son Ranbir Singh's time when the State was required to maintain a standing army of 26 to 30 thousand men. At that time many of the Muslim clans who had not long ago revolted against the Dogra rule could not have been trusted for enlistment in the army and the Hindu Dogra community that had suffered positive checks in its population due to continued fighting on the borders, was too small to meet the State's big requirement of soldiers Maharaja Gulab Singh and Maharaja Ranbir Singh were therefore obliged to enlist "foreigners" in the State Force. Among these Purabias

(easterners- probably meaning Biharis, Bengalis and Oryias of today) figure quite prominently in historical records. However being mercenaries they do not seem to have performed too well. As a matter of fact their reputation was so low that a rumour that Maharaja Gulab Singh had sent his Purabia troops in aid of the British during the Mutiny caused some panic in the British camp and it was not before they had made sure that the Maharaja's troops were Dogras, that they allowed them to proceed to Delhi. Nevertheless the Purabias were paid a rupee a month more than the local Dogras. They were gradually eased out and by 1885 there were hardly any left.

Another community from outside the State that was enlisted freely in the State army during the earlier days was the Sikhs. A good number of them seems to have flocked around Gulab Singh after he became the Raja of Jammu. It may, however, be made clear that the Chinese reference to the troops under General Zorawar Singh as 'singpa' (sikh solider) in their chronicals does not in anyway mean that these troops were Sikhs. It was just that Raja Gulab Singh being a vassal of the Sikhs his army even though comprising of Dogras was naturally referred to as the Sikh army. It is also possible that as the Dogras also supported beards in those days it was difficult to distinguishm them from the Sikhs. In 1846 after the State of Jammu and Kashmir came into being Maharaja Gulab Singh seems to have tried to meet his requirement of troops by enlisting Punjabi Sikh. Apparently he was prevented from doing so by the British. Gradually the Sikh representation in the State army dwindled to become negligible again probably as a result of British policy. It was only in 1932 that the State government under Maharaja Hari Singh made fresh efforts to attract Punjabi Sikhs into the army. For this the class composition of the newly raised 7th Battalion

was fixed as fifty percent Sikhs. Special drive was also made during the War to attract State subject Sikhs to colours which seems to have met with good amount of success. After the 7th Battalion was disbanded, the class composition of the 6th Battalion was changed to accomodate the Sikhs and when that Battalion disintegrated in 1947 due to treachery of its Muslim element the Sikhs were given a fifty percent share in the 4th Battalion in 1948, which they continue to hold to this day. Inspite of the low representation numerically, the Sikhs true to their e established traditions added greatly to the good name of the State and its army; both in battle as well as in sports.

The only non State subjects who have contributed to the fame and glory of the State army nearly as much as the Dogras themselves, have been the Gorkhas. They have formed part of the State army nearly all through its existence. Like the Dogras, alongside whom they have fought many a glorious battle, the Gorkhas hardly need any introduction. As fighters in the hills and jungles they remain unsurpassed by any other community. Their proficiency as soliders was first demonstrated in Nepal War of 1814. After that they became much sought after troops- sought by the British, Maharaja Ranjit Singh and what is of particular interest to us, Maharaja Gulab Singh, and all the subsequent Maharajas of Jammu and Kashmir. However, in the competition between the Indian Army and the State army for attracting the best material from Nepal the latter came off second best, being unable to pay its soliders as much as the former could. Fortunately, there was enough good material for both and the State was never so much at a loss. The State compensated the hillmen by permitting them to take their families to the forward most areas on the borders and also by permitting them to settle in the State as a matter of special favour.

"Brave as lions and vain as peacocks" the Gorkhas are known to have few prejudices in peace and none in war. Their national weapon is the Khukri and their skill with it is so remarkable that

given a human mark in the shape of an enemy in war, they can cut off his nose or ear or pierce his eye with an unerring percision. They never lose a chance of practicing with this weapon (be it by slaughtering animals or cutting bamboos) which they carry suspended from their waist belts in addition to their other arms.

Needless to say that no troops, whatever community they may belong to, can perform well without good leaders. Considering, therefore, the achievements of the State army from the time of its inception to the date of integration with the Indian Army much credit is due to its officers. Credit is particularly due to Officers of the earlier years, before the formation of the Imperial Service Corps, who were required to function independently without British supervision. All operations during this period were planned and successfully executed by the Dogra officers themselves. Interestingly these officers had no formal education or training as officers, nor was there any set system of selection. An officer just got thrown up from amongst sepoys by the dint of his merit. Belonging to the same community as the troops and having risen from the ranks the officer of those days maintained intimacy with troops such as would be unacceptable in the present times but this never affected his command. In the higher echelon in those days the military commander and the civil administrator merged into one. Infact the civil administrator of a district or a province automatically became a military commander irrespective of whether he had come up to that appointment the military way or the civil. It was thus that the higher commanders carried with them the titles of Dewan or Wazir rather than of a General. The system, that required courage, dedication and common sense on the part of higher commanders more than anytimes else, worked well and the Wazirs and Dewans displayed good sense of tactics and strategy in the various operations they conducted either for conquerring new territories for the Jammu by the Rajas or for subjugating the border tribes. The enemy they fought was

means to be despised. There is evidence to show that the British themselves avoided fighting with the tribals of these area till the Panjdeh episode brought home to them the seriousness of the threat to the Indian Empire from Russia. Never the less the system does not seem to have been in keeping with the times when the state was emerging from the medivial to the modern era. Colonel Steinback who had taken up service under Maharaja Gulab Singh as a commander of two regiments is known to have resigned in protest against being made subordinate to Dewan Hari Chand for the Chilas campaign ~~under~~ in 1851. That his prophesy of the failure of the campaign under a "civilian" proved to be incorrect is of course another matter. There was no rationality about the ranks of the middle order officer A Jemadar or a Subadar could mean much more than what he did subsequently during the British days.

The civil and military functions of an officers got finally separated in 1877 with the organisation of "columns" under Generals. It was also during this time that the ranks of the middle order officer got some what rationalised. Colonels were made commandeds of regiments, each of two battalions; the battalion being commanded by a commandant. Next to the commandant came the Adjutant which ~~was~~ at that time was considered a rank rather than an appointment. There was also one Major in each battalion, who performed the duties of a present day quartermaster, and stood next to the Adjutant in precedence. Subedars and Jemadars now commanded companies and platoons respectively.

Further rationalisation of ranks took place after the formation of the Imperial Service Corps. The army was organised into brigades each of which was commanded by a General. The battalion commanders now became Lieutenant Colonels with Majors as their second in command while the Adjutants rank was abolished and the appointment was filled by qualified Jemadars. Subedars filled the

appointment of Brigade Majors and Aid-de-Camp to the Generals commanding brigades. All officers, however, continued to come up through the ranks till about 1900 when a system of granting direct commission as Jemadar to the educated candidates was started. To further attract the educated to the army, the system was improved the next year to allow for direct commission as Majors to graduates, but their training continued to be on the job. With the tight control of the British officers over the Imperial Services troops the State Officer remained side-lined between 1890 and 1923. Urdu now replaced Dogri and all officers who had received their education in Dogri, (and there was quite a number), were suddenly declared uneducated and unceremoniously relieved from service.

It was only in 1923 that the Army adopted the modern rank structure to include Lieutenants and Captains with a proper system of selection and training of officers. Lieutenants and above were, thereafter, known as State Officers and the Subedars and Jemadars as Indian Officers on the analogy of Indian Army. Every effort was then made by the British to train State Force officers upto the standard of their own officers in the Indian Army through attachments and courses at the various schools of instructions in India. By the time the Second World War broke out the State Officers had attained such proficiency that one of them, Major Bhagwan Singh, could forcefully assert and obtain in 1940 the right to command his unit in war independently and free of the British Special Service Officers (SSOs) for the first time since the formation of the Imperial Service Corps. Subsequently in 1942 the SSOs were removed from all the units of the State Forces serving under the Crown and the 4th J&K Infantry commanded by Lieut. Colonel Narain Singh (Sambyal) and officered entirely by State Officers, earned great renown in the Burma Campaign in 1944-1945. The 2nd Battalion under Lieut Colonel Khuda Baksh also went overseas in 1944 free of British officers and did a commendable job of whatever it was required to do in Iran and Syria. After Independence the leadership of the State Officers was put to a

severe test and, considering the many disabling handicaps under which they were required to functions their performance, on the whole, was magnificent.

The troops of the State army, no matter to which community they belonged have, some how, always ~~As the troops of the State army belonged to the same community as the Maharaja, it was not difficult for them~~ to identified themselves with the cause of their rulers. The loyalty of the troops for the Maharajas has, in fact ~~therefore~~, been legendary all through history. Indeed it was this loyalty the egged the ~~troops~~ on to conquer God-forsaken lands which, while demanding supreme sacrifices from them, brought no personal material benefits to them; not even enough pay. Even when communal politics had been initiated in the State by vested interests, the troops refused to get divided and the Muslims remained as steadfast in their loyalty towards the Maharaja as their Hindu counterpart, all through the various Muslim agitations in the State between 1931 and 1946. That the loyalty of the Muslims troops ultimately cracked under the great communal holocaust of 1947 is the most tragic happening in the history of the State Force. The Maharajas who were the dejure and defacto Commanders-in-Chief of the State army, on their part, reciprocated the warm feelings that the troops had for them. They looked after them as well as they could within the

restraints of the poor financial resources of the State. They took keen interest in the training and battle-worthiness of their army. To keep in touch with the state of proficiency of the troops, they reviewed them on parade regularly. In the earlier times such parades were held twice a year on Basant Panchami and Dussehra. The Basant Panchami Parade used to be held in the Mubarak Mandi Premises in Jammu and the troops in their full ceremonial dress were reviewed by the Maharaja from the balcony of his Palace. This parade seems to have been discontinued since the early years of Maharaja Pratap Singh's rule. The Dussehra parade on the other hand continued to be held as the biggest event of military activity right up to 1947. Preparations for the Dussehra parade, ~~in which the Muslim troops were involved as much as the Hindu,~~ started many days before the day of the parade with units vying with each other for earning top honours in drill, turnout and maintenance of equipment. The parade itself was a normal ceremonial parade held at the Batmalu ground in Srinagar, preceding the ceremony connected with the burning of the effigy of Ravana. Muslim troops participated in this parade as much as the Hindus and it was not uncommon for a senior Muslim officer to be commanding it. The Maharaja who as the Commander-in-Chief took the Salute on such parades ~~it~~ is known to have dealt very severely with lapses on the part of the participating unit Commanders, if ever such lapses occurred.

During the course of its long history the State Force has had its share of brickbats along with the bouquets as any army would. Not all the brickbats have, however, been justifiable and need to be refuted as much in the interest of history as in maintaining the good name of the Force. Reference is being made here to certain uncharitable remarks made by Lieut General LP Sen in his book Slender was the Thread (Orient Longman, New Delhi 1969), and the scathing attack made by Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru in his demi official letters to Sardar Patel published in Sardar Patel Correspondance volume I by Navajivan Publishing House Ahmedabad (1971).

Lieut General L P Sen who, as a Brigadier, commanded the first brigade that reached Srinagar after the State's accession to the Indian Union, has written rather disparagingly about " a very large number of Jammu and Kashmir State troops, fully trained and equipped with officers and non commissioned officers " who he thought " were concealing themselves in Badami Bagh barracks in Srinagar " (page 84) to avoid going into action against the raiders. He has given out the number of such troops, whom he got paraded before Major General Kulwant Singh, GOC J&K Force (Indian Army) during the first week of December 1947, as 1850, and he asserts that ~~that~~ these many troops were present in the Cantonment on 22 October when Brigadier Rajindra Singh rushed out with just 200 men to meet the invasion. The latter part of his assertion is so ridiculous as to carry its own refutation and nothing more need be said about that, but the former part, coming as it does from a commander who should have been in the know of things,

certainly needs to be commented upon. Without casting aspertions on the truthfulness of General Sen it may be mentioned that all State Force officers, including Brigadier Faqir Singh, the Kashmir Brigade Commander, who were present in Srinagar at that time have vehmently denied that the State troops were ever paraded before General Kulwant Singh as claimed by General Sen in his book.* In this connection it is also pertinent to note that in the second week of December not more than 200 men could be mustered from the Badami Bagh Contonment for the relief column sent to Skardu under arrangement of J&K Force (Indian Army). It is also on record that all State troops in the Cantonment were organised into 'B' Sector under the Indian Army which was commanded by Lieut Colonel Sher Singh of the Kashmir Body Guard Cavalry. Who were then these 2000 odd men that were idling away in the barracks at Srinagar? Obviously there has been some mix up somewhere. There is a suggestion that they could be the garrison police companies of the State (which were formed out of ex-servicemen) that had just then been rushed to Srinagar for internal security duties. Be it as it may, it was probably a case of lapse in liaison between the State Force and the Indian Army over which the General seems to have over-reacted. In fact on going through his book one finds that impulsiveness is not totally outside his nature. He himself narrates the incident where he ordered Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah out of his operations room without giving time to Lieut Colonel P N Kak, the Liaison Officer who had ushered the Sheikh in to disclose the identity of the visitor (page 77). Elsewhere in the book he proudly narrates how in Poonch he bullied a State Force Lieut Colonel for no fault of his, when he found the bridge over the Betar Nalla destroyed by the Garrison Police guard who mistook the Indian Army relief column for Pakistanis (pp 123-24). Although during his meeting with the Poonch Brigade Commander, a little later it transpired that the

*Lt Col P N Kak, the State Force Liaison officer with the Indian Army has also categorically denied the occurrance of such an event. In a letter to the author dated 2 January 86 Colonel Kak states that the ration strength at B B Cantt was composed mostly of non combatants and administrative personnel who could not have been used for fighting on the front.

Poonch garrison had not been informed about the approach of the relief column the General expresses no regret for having flared up unnecessarily, even in his book that he wrote twenty years after the event. It was perhaps this long gap of twenty years between the occurrence of events and the writing of the book that caused many inaccuracies to creep into his writings. Brigadier Krishna Singh has hotly denied that the matter of command of the Poonch Brigade was ever discussed with him by General Sen as claimed by him and that there was no question of his stepping down in favour of Lieut Colonel Pritam Singh. In fact he continued to command the garrison (less the Indian Army battalion) till he was posted out to take over as the Brigadier General Staff at Army Headquarters (State Force). It is pertinent to note that even General Harbaksh Singh, who was one of the battalion commanders under General Sen, complained bitterly in the press about a number of inaccuracies in the book no sooner than it was published.

The unkindest cut was, however, made by Pt Jawahar Lal Nehru when in a letter to Sardar Patel dated 30 May 1948 he wrote that "the State troops in Ladakh and Skardu had behaved in a most cowardly and disgraceful manner" and that "they had not only run away at the slightest provocation but had handed over our weapons and ammunition to the enemy". He believed that "without this ammunition to the emeny could hardly have functioned for long" (page 91). One wonders which incident(s) the Prime Minister was referring to. The Skardu garrison was at that time still holding out inspite of the garrison being out of ammunition and on the verge of starvation, while Dras and Kargil had fallen only after a bitter fight against heavy odds. In Ladakh proper about three platoons of State troops were operating under the command of Lieut Colonel Prithi Chand (Indian Army) and there is no record of them having acted in a manner as alleged by the Prime Minister. The only debacle in which the State troops were involved

was the failure of two relief columns to reach Skardu. Both these columns had been sent out into the blue without adequate logistic support and these who have had the experience of fighting in the North West Frontier during the pre-independence days would agree that delacles in such areas could occur more due to bad planning than inefficiency of troops. It is not surprising of Nehru was misinform-ed about the details of the operation and causes of its failure, as finding of scape-goats for unsuccessful operations is not uncommon. It could also be that the remarks were politically motivated to lend support to Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah in his tussle with the Maharaja for the control over the State Force. This is evident from what Nehru had to say in his letter to Sardar Patel (who incidently was supporting the Maharaja on this issue) dated 5 June 1948. "About t the army (State)", he wrote, "I fear that it can never improve if the Maharaja has any thing to do with it .... There are Hindu Dogra troops They or their officers have lost all morale and discipline and any further association with the Maharaja will worsen the position"(page 201). It is a regrettable fact of history that Nehru's immense hatred for Maharaja Hari Singh and all that was connected with his name made him to say things that were not always well thought off or wholly correct. His remarks on the role of the State troops in the Quit Kashmir movement in 1946 which he had to ultimately withdraw is another such example. It is interesting to note that after Hari Singh had been removed from the scene Nehru in 1957 accepted the proposal of General K S Thimayya DSO, Chief of the Army Staff, (who was General Officer Commanding Sri Division during the J&K operations) for the integration of all the State Force battalions with all their officer into the Indian Army to form a separate regiment, without the sort of screening that the forces of all the other princely states were made to undergo. With this unique privilege conferred on the J&K State Force by the

Prime Minister, all his earlier unpleasant remarks could be deemed to have been retracted.

It may also be mentioned here that in the initial stages of the operations much prejudice among the Indian Army officers seems to have existed against the State Force officers, which though remaining off the record was a source of bitterness between the two. At one stage the Indian Army seems to have tried to re-introduce the British System of attaching Special Service Officers (SSOs) to the State Force units, when Lieut Colonel Sampuran Bachan Singh and Major Coutes were attached with the 5th J&K Light Infantry which was being commanded by Lieut Colonel Kripal Singh of the State Force, as advisors. These were however recalled on representation by Colonel Kripal Singh. The Indian Army in the initial stages also remained reluctant to place its troops/officers under the command of State Officers, like it happened in Poonch where a system of dual command seems to have emerged with Brigadier Krishna Singh of the State Force and Lieut Colonel Pritam Singh of the Indian Army continuing to command their respective troops independent of each other till Brigadier Krishna Singh was posted out and all troops were, thereafter, placed under the command of Lieut Colonel (later Brigadier) Pritam Singh. These prejudices were however to disappear soon and while the legal hitch was overcome by granting superimposed Indian Commission to all State Force Officers, a number J&K Militia battalions being commanded by Indian Army Officers were placed under Jammu and Kashmir Brigades being commanded by State Force Officers. In 1949 Lieut Colonel Bhagwan Singh was who was commanding the 1st J&K Infantry at Miran Sahib was specially picked up to command ~~the~~ 168 Infantry Brigade ~~at~~ of the Indian Army at Udhampur, in his existing rank, for over three months before a permanent incumbent for it could be found. Subsequently when the Jammu Brigade ~~under~~ moved to Poonch under Brigadier NS Rawat of the State Force a number of Indian Army battalions formed part of it.

If doubt there were any regarding the efficiency of the State Force Visaq vis the Indian Army, these must have been laid to rest permanently after the battle of Hussain-i-walla in 1956 when the 4th J&K Infantry under Lieut Colonel Vakil Singh inflicted such heavy casualties on the Pakistanis as to deter them from carrying out their nefarious designs. Little wonder that in 1957 the entire State Force (including the Officers cadre) was merged with the Indian Army - its infantry component emblock forming a separate regiment that came to be known as the Jammu and Kashmir Rifles.

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CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN OF THE JAMMU ARMY AND ITS EARLY EXPLOITS

THE EARLY HISTORY OF JAMMU[1]

There is very little authentic record of the ancient history of Jammu. In fact most of it is based on legends, and according to one such legend, the Jammu city was founded over three thousand years ago by one Jammu Lochan on the right bank of Tawi after his brother, Bahu Lochan, had some years earlier, laid the foundation of Bahu on the left bank of the River. This legend has, however, not been accepted by historians as it is not supported by historical evidence. Historians believe that Jammu came into existence not too long before 900 A.D. This belief is based on the fact that the earliest known reference to Durgara (from which the terms 'Duggar'and 'Dogra' have obviously been derived and which could be the ancient name of Jammu), is the one found in copper plate inscriptions pertaining to 910-30 which speak of the victory of Sahila Verman of Chamba over the forces of the ruler of Durgara.

The first authentic reference to Jammu is found in the Memoirs of Timur who sacked this town in the course of his invasion of India in 1398-99. In his Memoirs, Timur describes the people of Jammu as "warlike" ~~gabrs~~ and "athelatic Hindus..... not submissive and obedient to the Sultans of Hindustan". At the time of Timur's attack Jammu was being ruled by Maldev who was forced to embrace Islam after his defeat. This conversion

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1. Based on the History of Jammu and Kashmir State Volume I (making of the State) by Dr. M.L. Kapur, Jammu 1980.

should have had some far reaching effects on the history of Jammu but nothing of the sort seems to have happened. Although nothing is known of Maldev after his conversion, it appears that he reconverted to Hindusim at the first opportunity, as his immediate successor, Bhim Dev, is known to have been a Hindu.

Starting from the begining of the 15th Century when Bhim Dev rendered valuable military help to Sultan Mubarak Shah of Delhi against Jasrat Khokhar of Punjab and got killed in the process, Jammu remained at war with the rulers of Punjab for nearly a hundred years or so. During this period which lasted right upto the reign of Kapur Dev the successions to the throne of Jammu were invariably peaceful. Dissentions within the ruling family started only in 1571 when after the death of Kapur Dev his two sons Samil Dev and Jay Dev fell out with each other and set up their independent authority at Jammu and Bahu respectively. This division of Jammu made it easy for the Moghuls to establish their rule over the entire territory. Jammu and Bahu remained divided all though the Moghul rule; the enimosity of the two little kingdoms being marked by raids of one against the other, that caused much mutual destruction. In between they did unite once during the rule of Hari Dev (1652-82) but the rift between the Royal houses surfaced again after Hari Dev died while leading a Moghul expedition into the Deccan.

It was not till Ranjit Dev came to the throne that Jammu became united again and was able to regain its past glory. Within a short time Ranjit Dev extended his territories far and wide. Once or twice he even attacked Sialkot and over-ran many miles of the country on both sides of the Chenab. Subsequently the Dogras became so bold that they began to plunder the Moghul

caravans moving between Punjab and Kashmir. This invited the serious attention of the Governor of Punjab and taking advantage of of the rift between Ranjit Dev and his step brother Ghansar Dev, he attacked Jammu in 1748. Ranjit Dev was defeated and taken to Lahore as a prisoner while Ghansar Dev was installed on the Jammu 'gaddi'. In 1760, however, Ranjit Dev secured his release through his well wishers and returned to Jammu to reoccupy the throne.

By the time Ranjit Dev came to the throne a second time the Moghul Empire had begun to totter under the weight of Afghan invasions. Taking advantage of the conditions in Punjab caused by the weakening of the Moghul hold, Ranjit Dev once again under-took to expand his territory. There were twenty two Dogra principalities- eleven in the Jullunder circle and eleven in the Duggar circle and Ranjit Dev was able to bring most of them under his control. Indeed by 1773 his authority extended over the entire country from Jasrota to Kaluwal on the Chenab and from Roras to Mandikail in Gurdaspur. The Jammu kingdom then included Chamba, Balwar, (Basohli), Bhaddu, Mankot (Ramkot) Bandraltha (Ramnagar) Jasrota, Jammu, Bhuti, Chineni, Kishtwar and Bhadarwah. The rulers of Ranjauri, Bhimber and Poonch are also known to have been in attendance at the Jammu Court. This period of Ranjit Dev's rule certainly forms the golden era of the history of Jammu. This, not only for the large extent of the territory under one Dogra ruler, but also because of economic prosperity, made possible by the security and stability that Jammu enjoyed during this period. Some historians even believe that Jammu town was one of the richest towns in India of those days.

After the death of Ranjit Dev in 1780 Jammu lost much of its glory and suffered much at the hands of the Sikh Misls who ~~replaced the Moghuls~~ gained ascendency after the withdrawal of the Afghans in Punjab. Ranjit Dev was succeeded by his Son Brij Lal and it was during his reign that the Sikh Misl Mahan Singh (father of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh) attacked Jammu and ransacked it. Brij Lal was succeeded by his one year old son with Mian Mota (Brij Lal's cousin) acting as the regent but when the boy died at the age of eleven, Ajit Singh, a nephew of Brij Lal, ascended the 'gaddi'.

Meanwhile events of far reaching consequence were taking place in Punjab. The Sikh Misl Ranjit Singh's ambition of beinging all the Sikh Misls of Punjab under his rule was begining to bear fruit. The personality of Ranjit Singh had already impressed itself on the other Sikh leaders and he now coveted Lahore which in Punjab was associated with political power. His opportunity came during the second invasion of Shah Zaman of Kabul Persia in 1798-99. As the King was unable to take his heavy artillary across the flooded Jehlum, he made it known to the aspiring Chief that his ability to take the guns across the river would be rewarded. Ranjit Singh through his ingenuity and determination get a large number of guns of the Durani Shah across and procured from him as a reward what he had always wanted - a royal investure of Lahore, the capital of Punjab. After this there was no looking back for Maharaja Ranjit Singh as he grew from strength to strength and by 1807 he had not only brought all the Sikh Misls of Punjab under his banner but also started a process of conquests for carying out a great Kingodom for himself.

Jammu was bound to be Maharaja Ranjit Singh's first target. Consequently in 1808 he despatched a large army under Bhai Hukam Singh to reduce Jammu and annex it to Punjab. Mian Mota who was incharge of the town organised a small force and came out of the town to give battle. When the forces met outside the Gumat Gate, Young Gulab Singh, a lad of sixteen at that time, was found taking an active and prominent part in the battle alongside the other Dogra hero Mian Dido. The defence was successful to some extent and Hukam Singh was forced to withdraw to Saidgarh. Gulab Singh's part in the successful defence of Jammu had not been a small one and his performance had attracted the attention of the Sikh commander Hukam Singh, which was later to stand him in good stead. Ultimately, however, the Jammu defences could not stand the onslaught of the large Sikh army and it was not long before the whole of the State passed under the suzerainty of the Sikh Kingdom.

After the annexation of Jammu to Punjab, the two Dogra heroes, Mian Dido and Mian Gulab Singh adopted two different paths for serving perhaps a common end-return of the Dogra rule in Jammu. While Dido adopted a path of confrontation with the Sikhs, Gulab Singh chose to co-operate with them and win them over through loyality and service. Consequently while Dido organised a guerilla force to harras the "foreigners" and compell them to leave the State, Gulab Singh secured service in the Sikh army in 1809 on recommendation of Bhai Hukam Singh, who, as we have seen, was attracted by the prowess of Gulab Singh at the battle of the Gumat Gate. The same year Gulab Singh

was admitted to the Lahore Court where he impressed the Maharaja so much that soon after his two brothers were also accomodated at the Court and in less than three years he himself was able to rise from the rank of an ordinary soldier to that of Commander of a regiment in the Sikh army.

In 1812 Ranjit Singh sent his first expedition against Kashmir in alliance with Fateh Khan, the all powerful Wazir of Afghanistan. The alliance, however, broke halfway as Fateh Khan tried to forstall DeWan Mdkam Chand, the Sikh commander, in the occupation of Kashmir. Although the trick failed, Fateh Kham still managed to take possession of Kashmir to the exclusion of the Sikhs. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was not prepared to allow Fateh Khan to occupy Kashmir so easily and with a view to disoldge the willy Afghan he himself led an expedition to Kashmir in 1814. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, however, made a strategical error in dividing his force into two columns; one under himself to advance on Kashmir via Poonch and the other under DeWan Ram Dyal by Way of Bahrangalla. This division of the army proved disasterous as the Governor of Kashmir was able to concentrate superior numbers against Ram Dyal's column and cut it up completely. Gulab Singh's regiment formed part of this column and he showed the greatest courage and presence of mine in these perilous circumstances, as he reassembled his forces and broght them back safely. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was greatly please with the performance of Gulab Singh and W aWarded him with Kharoti and Beyol Jagirs. Kashmir was ultimately brought under Sikh rule in 1819 after another Sikh expedition in which Gulab Singh had an important role to play.

The rise of Gulab Singh in favour at the Lahore Durbar during the next few years was astronomic. Immediately after the Kashmir expedition he rendered valuable service in the reduction of Garh Damala fort in the Jullunder Doab. Consequently he was awarded Lala Chowbara, in the Sialkot district, and Ramgarh near Samba as Jagirs. Soon followed more opportunities for Gulab Singh to prove his worth as a soldier and he made the best of each one of them; being handsomely rewarded each time with some jagir or the other. He particularly distinguished himself in the Sikh expeditions to Multan (1818), Kashmir (1819), Mankera and Dera Ghazi Khan (1819-20). Majaraja Ranjit Singh on his part was so generous in rewarding Gulab Singh for his valour and loyalty that within seven years of his taking up service in Lahore, he had become an important grandee at the Sikh Durbar. Besides the Kharoti and Beyol Jagirs awarded to him in 1814 and Lala Chowara and Ramgarh in 1815, Riasi was bestowed on him in 1816-17.

While Gulab Singh was thus rising in favour with the Sikhs, Mian Dido had intensified his guerilla activities against the Sikh army in Jammu. Dido is said to have descended from Hari Dev who ruled Jammu from 1652 to 1688. Generous and helpful to the oppressed and the poor that he was, he had won the heart of the common man. As the Robinhood of Jammu he was received by the people with open arms wherever he went. In fact it was this support of the local population that enabled him to conduct his guerilla actions with near perfection. With just a few men he would often attack a strong garrison of the Sikhs and after inflicting

heavy casualities on them escape unmolested. By 1816 his word had become law in the Jammu hills and the Lahore Durbar was finding it increasingly difficult to even collect revenue from here. Ever since Jammu was annexed Maharaja Ranjit Singh had despatched a number of expeditions against Dido without any of these beings able to subdue him. In 1816 Prince Kharak Singh, whose Jagir Jammu was, had come himself to personally supervise operations against Dido but he too had had to return without accomplishing much. In fact with every unsuccessful action of the Sikh troops, Dido and his guerillas had become bolder and bolder. Ultimately things came to such a pass that even the line of communication between Punjab and Kashmir that passed through Jammu had become totally unsafe. What, however, proved to be the proverbial last straw was the personal affront to Maharaja Ranjit Singh caused by Dido when in 1820 he looted the fruits and goods which had been sent by the Governor of Kashmir for the personal use of the Maharaja. The Maharaja was so enraged that he took it upon himself to personally lead an expedition against Dido. Gulab Singh was, however, quick to grab this opportunity of showing his mettle and he pleaded with Maharaja Ranjit Singh to give him a chance to chastise the rebel before the Maharaja himself took this trouble. The request having been made with all the respect and loyalty to the Ruler was conceded to by the Maharaja and in order to lace Gulab Singh with the necessary authority for accomplishing the task, Ranjit Singh granted to Gulab Singh and his family, as Jagir, all the territory connected with Jammu, alongwith the small principalities of Patti, Bhoti,

Bandraltha, Chinenl and Kishtwar. The grant was, however, made on certain conditions. These included, firstly, that the grantees were to maintain 400 horsemen for the service of the Maharaja; secondly, they were to ensure the protection of the caravan route to Kashmir passing through Jammu; thirdly, they were to either kill or capture Dido or force him across the Sutlej; and fourthly that they could extend their territory only with the consent of the Lahore Durbar. Mian Kishore Singh (father of Gulab Singh) who was a decendent of Surat Dev, brother of the famous Ranjit Dev, was given the title of Raja and appointed as the administratorymf of the Jagir with wide powers.

Gulab Singh was determined to fullfill the conditions laid down by the Maharaja with the hope of, one day, reviving the rule of his dynasty over Jammu. As a first step towards the liquidation of Dido and his guerillas, he sought to deprive them of the support of the people by taking to task and punishing those who rendered Dido such support. For indentifying the supporters of the great rebel he adopted a novel strategem. He sent to the various Villages his own men disguised as guerillas and Dido's sympathisers got exposed as they came out to help them. Confused as to who was who and fearing that they might invite Gulab Singh's wrath if exposed as Dido's sympathisers, the people preferred to disociate themselves from Dido's struggle against the government. After isolating Dido had thus, Gulab Singh then marched on Jagti which was Dido's Jagir. Dido had taken refuge on the Trikuta peak, where the famous Vaishno Devi Shrine is located. There he was hunted

out by Gulab Singh's men and in the skirmish that followed Dido fell flighting like a lion. After the death of Dido, Dogra insurgency in Jammu was easily stamped out.

The end of Dogra insurgency must have given Maharaja Ranjit Singh the greatest of satisfaction but before making up his mind about a suitable reward for Gulab Singh, he wished to put him to another test. Raja Agar Khan of Rajauri had, through his intrigues, greatly contributed towards the failure of the Sikh expedition to Kashmir in 1814. In 1819 also, Agar Khan had given considerable trouble to the Sikh forces before Kashmir was finally conquerred. To punish him, therefore, his territory had been raided and occupied but Agar Khan had escaped and fled to the hills and could not be traced inspite of best efforts of the Lahore Durbar. Ranjit Singh having now been re-assured of Gulab Singh's capabilities, gave him the difficult task of seizing Agar Khan. Gulab Singh as usual took up the challenge and it was not long before he had the fugitive in the net and sent to Lahore as a prisoner. Later in 1821 when Gulab Singh subjugated Kishtwar more through strategem than military action, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was convinced that Jammu could be ruled successfully only by a man like Gulab Singh. On the death of Gulab Singh 's father, Raja Kishore Singh, therefore, be conferred the "Rajgi" of Jammu on Gulab Singh at a Raj Tilak ceremony held at Akhnoor on 17 January 1822 during which he himself planted the Tilak on Gulab Singh's forehead. Subsequently Gulab Singh's brothers were also granted Jagirs. While Dhyan Singh received Bhimbar, Poonch and Kotli, Suchet Singh was awarded Jagirs of Samba, Basoli, Jasrota and Ram Nagar. All these Jagirs were managed by Gulab Singh alongwith his own territories which now included

Dutta, Kashmir

THE MAHARAJA SHRI GULAB SINGH

Riasi, Kishtwar, Rajouri, Samarth and Jammu. Raja Gulab Singh was now, therefore, the virtual ruler of a vast territory; as vast perhaps as that ruled by his great and powerful ancestor, Ranjit Dev.

ORIGIN OF THE JAMMU STATE FORCE

In the acquisition of territories by Raja Gulab Singh what is pertainent to our subject is the fact that it created the necessity for raising an armed force which was to become the fore-runner of what is proudly known today as the Jammu and Kashmir Rifles Regiment of the Indian Army.

The first armed force to be ~~created~~ raised by Gulab Singh was a company of 200 soldiers in 1815 on being granted the Jagirs of Lala Chobara and Ramgarh for the valuable service rendered in the reduction of Garh Damala fort in the Jullundur Doab.[2] Thereafter in 1820 Raja Kishore Singh and his Sons were obliged to maintain 400 Sowars for service of the Lahore Durbar under the terms of the grant of Jammu Jagir to them.[3] The first armed force of any consequence howerver, seems to have been raised only in 1822 when Gulab Singh was created the Raja of Jammu and as a consequence was expected to keep a small regular army of horse and foot soldiers to be presented at the Dussehra festival for review at Lahore.[4] The exact strength of this original force is not known but it is obvious from the events that followed that there was a rapid rise in the strength of the Jammu army within the first few years. In fact increase in strength must have become necessary in the

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2. K.M. Panikar, The Founding of the Kashmir State London 1930 p 24.
3. Major G.C. Smyth, The History of the Reigning Family of Lahore Delhi. pp
4. Ibid pp

very first year of its raising when, after seeing Gulab Singh firmly in the saddle, all Lahore troops were withdrawn from Jammu and Raja Gulab Singh was left in, more or less, independent possession of his principality.

The greatest impetus to the development of the Jammu army came from the policy of territorial expansion pursued by the new Raja of Jammu. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, we have seen, had given his tacit support to this policy with the only stipulation that the Lahore Durbar be informed of the territorial acquisitions that may be made from time to time. But of this we shall see later. The immediate task before Gulab Singh was that of consolidating his possessions. It would appear that not all his kinsmen were prepared to voluntarily accept Gulab Singh as their Raja and many a petty chieftain had to be forced into submission. Representative perhaps of all the little actions that Raja Gulab Singh was compelled to take against such refractory chieftains is his reduction of the fort of Samartah in 1824. The action also gives some insight into the irregular nature of his army and the peculiar mode of its functioning.

EARLY EXPLOITS

Reduction of Samartah Fort (1824)[5]

Samartah fort adjoins Bhadoo territory in the surroundings of the hill country of Ramnagar. On Raja Gulab singh's orders for the reduction of the Fort a few Dalpatia and Birpuria Mians (Rajputs) and about 200 warlike young men advanced in that direction and halted at the first stage of Sruinsar. From there these troops moved to Mansar where about

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5. Diwan Kirpa Ram, Gulabnama, translation by Dr. Sukhdev Singh Charak pp 125-127.

about one thousand warriors had collected from adjacent villages on receiving orders from Raja Gulab Singh through runners and beat of drums. All the soldiers then closed on the Samartah Fort.

After reaching the Fort, the army split into three parts and set to work on the breast work. Raja Gulab Singh who had also reached the place by now, placed himself in the centre, close to the fort. The left flank of the breast work was entrusted to Mian Labh Singh Kumadan (Commandant) and Mian Diwan Singh. On the right flank were Sajadah Rai and Saon Singh Samial. At night Raja Gulab Singh put on a black dress as a measure of camouflage, so as not to be seen by the enemy. Although the Samartah garrison fired heavily from the top of the Fort, this did not deter the rapid 'well diggers' from continuing their worker- trenching and mining. When the trenches were ready the soldiers took shelter in them raising heaps of earth in their front. Similar breast works were carried right to the foot of the Fort. Exchange of fire contined the whole night and in the morning preparations for assaulting the Fort were started. These included construction of ladders. Meanwhile Mian Gulab Singh Dalpatia took three to four hundred strong armed men and hurriedly felled down trees; collecting the twigs for use in filling the most of the Fort. After all the preparations for the assault had been completed the besiegers asked the garrison, through yells and loud calls, to surrender and avoid slaughter.

The garrison of the fort had been unnerved by the determination with which preparations for the assault were being made. Just before the assault was to be made, therefore, they

agreed to surrender. Mians Bishen Singh, Labh Singh, and Gulab Singh Dalpatia went inside the fort to conclude the terms of surrender. The Fort was then taken over and after appointing Mian Bishen Singh to the than-adari of the place Raja Gulab singh withdrew to Jammu. Subsequently the place was merged with the Samba Jagir of Raja Suchet Singh.

~~The Poonch Regiment~~

In 1827 Dhyan Singh was created Raja of Poonch region in return for the service of one platoon which the Raja was reguired to maintain on behalf of the Lahore Durbar.[6] This small force gradually grew into a regiment, indenpendent of the Jammu army till ~~it was merged therein;~~ probably ~~after~~ the death of Dyhan Singh ~~and~~ or his son Hira Singh. Thereafter with the responsibility for the security of Poonch having been taken over by the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir the Poonch Regiment came down to the level of Palace Guards, occasionally performing police duties.

Not necessary.

Conquest of Ladakh

By 1833 Raja Gulab Singh was firmly established in his little kingdom. The time was now opportune for putting into practice the policy of conquests and territorial extension of the Jammu Raj. The strength of the Jammu army then is not known nor the manner in which it was organised. It appears that the stading army was still small but it could be swelled up with irregulars on an as-required-basis. There does not appear to have been any dearth of soldiers for any operation. Most of the Dogras of those days, specially the Mians (Rajputs), possessed their own arms in the use of which they were proficient even

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6. ~~Ibid pp~~ 156
7. Based primarily on Basti Ram's account of the Dogra War and other information vide Ladak by A. Cunningham pp 333-350. Supplemented by information contained in Indian Conquest of Himalayan Territories by Dr. Sukhdev Singh Charak.

before they reached the age of adolescence. The other qualities of a soldier in those days, such as bravery, loyalty, perseverence, physical and mental endurance and above all an emotional involvement with the cause, were inborn in the Dogras, which enabled them to take to the army as fish to water. The pays were meagre and hardly any system of regular payments or that of supply of clothing and rations existed. Yet at the call of the Ruler thousands thronged to his service as a matter of privilege. Numbers could thus be raised at short notice with little or no formal training. As for their organisation they certainly seem to have been divided into regiments of infantry, artillery and cavalry but with no standard organisation as such. As with the Sikh army of Lahore, no numbers or names appear to have been given to the different regiments; each being known mainly by the name of its commander. At the district level, where military duties tended to merge with those of the civil, both these responsibilities rested in one person. Prominent among the higher echlons Commanders in those days were Dewan Dilbag Rae, Dewan Hari Chand, Wazir Zorawar Singh Kalhuria, Wazir Lakhpat Rai and Mian Udham Singh sons of Raja Gulab Singh.

The only direction in which Gulab Singh could extend his territories was towards the north, which areas suffered from a power vacuum and which Gulab Singh could not have failed to take note of. The conquest of Ladakh was thus planned. As the extension of Jammu territories infact amounted to an extention of the Sikh kingdom, Maharaja Ranjit Singh could not have but approved Gulab Singh's conquest plans. In fact Ranjit Singh had had his eyes on these territories since 1821. Fear of the Maharaja of Punjab was known to be general in Ladakh and the Sikh Governor of

Kashmir had already been demanding the payment of tribute from the Lakakhi King. But the distant state though weak in terms of military strength was little molested by the Sikhs for want of a military leader who could lead a large scale expedition into a country, defended more by the high altitude, barren country side, difficult terrain and inhospitable climate, than the military prowess of its inhabitants. In Wazir ZoraWar Singh, Gulab Singh had found the required military leader and in his Dogras he had found the required troops, that could not only fight against the peculiar enemy but also against the tyranny of nature. His mind regarding the conquest of Ladakh was thus made, and it was perhaps for this reason that he had appointed ZoraWar Singh as the Hakim of Kishtwar- the gateway to the territories across the inner Himalayas that had been earmarked for conquest.

ZoraWar Singh Kalhuria was born in 1786 in a Rajput family of Kulhar, Now called Bilaspur, which forms an integral part of what is today known as the Himachal Pradesh. He left home early at the age of sixteen and took up service as a private servant with Rana Jaswant Singh, Jagirdar of Marmethi in Doda. Here he got an opportunity of learning the art of archery and swordmanship in the traditional manner of a Rajput youth. Soon afterwards ZorWar Singh joined service as a soldier with the 'Kiladar' of Riasi. Being brave, intelligent, and energetic he won the favour of the 'Kiladar' who often employed him for carrying message to Raja Gulab Singh. It was on one of these occasions that he was able to impress the Raja by pointing out to him the waste that was occuring in the supply department due to faulty planning. He even produced a scheme by which considerable saving could be affected. Gulab Singh, who was quick

to recognise merit accepted the scheme, which when implemented proved very efficacious. ZoraWar Singh was immediately promoted as inspector of commissariat supplies for all the forts north of Jammu. Eventually when Gulab Singh became the Jagirdar of Jammu in 1820, ZoraWar Singh received the title and appointment of Wazir. After the occupation of Kishtwar in 1821 he was made the Hakim or Governor of Kishtwar. It is not certain whether Gulab Singh had the conquest of Ladakh in mind when he positioned him there but it is was well that he did so. Kishtwar, besides being the gateway to the Himalayan kingdom of Ladakh, with its little plain surrounded by high snow ~~x~~ clad mountains, provided ZoraWar Singh with an area some what akin to that of the impending operations, where he could train his troops. being no less enthusiastic about leading an expedition to Ladakh than his master, ~~xx~~ he made the best of the time that became available to him from the day the decision to invade Ladakh was taken to the day the Dogra army actually marched into Ladakh in 1834. This training in warfare at high altitudes stood the Dogras in good-stead during the subsequent operations.

Ladakh is the country lying to the west of Tibet and like its eastern neighbour it is inhabited by the Bot-pa race who profess the Buddist faith under a peculiar heirarchy of monks or Lamas. On the north it is bounded by Korakoram mountains, on the east and sourth-east by the Chinese districts of Rudok and Chumurti (which once formed part of the great Ladakhi Empire) while to its south are the districts of Lahul and Spiti (which also formerly belonged to Ladakh). To the west of it lies Kashmir and Baltistan; the former separated by the Western Himalayas and the latter by an imaginary line ~~k~~ drawn from the mouth of

the Dras river to the source of the Nubra river. It is one of the most elevated inhabited regions of the world; the average height above sea level being about 12000 ft. The mountain ranges that encircle it contain peaks ranging from 25000 feet to 20000 ft. The general aspect of Ladakh is extreme barrenness. There are, however, many fertile tracts along the rivers and nallas, covered with luxuriant crops. Its climate is characterised by great extremes of heat and cold and by excessive dryness. The extreme cold during the winter is between 30 to 40 degrees centigrade below zero, while during the summer the temperature shoots up to 20 degrees above zero at many places. Snow falls quite often but not in any large quantity except in the Dras region where the snow fall is ~~many feet~~ very heavy deep.

The attempt at the direct conquest of Ladakh was not without great risks and ZoraWar Singh could not have been unaWare of these. The severe cold was certain to reduce the effectiveness of the Dogra soldiers, while the barrenness of the country restricted the deployment of a very large force. Anticipating these difficulties the Dogras General had made adequate arrangements for countering them. Strategy, tactics and administrative arrangements were so adopted as to suit the peculiar conditions. Besides he had chosen experienced soldiers and trained them appropriately for the task. The chief Dogra officiers under him were Mian Rai Singh, Mehta Basti Ram, Mirza Rasul Beg, Rana Zalim Singh, Shinghe Mankotia, Mian Tuta, Sirdar Uttam Singh, Wazir Khoja Bhunja, Imam Malik, Sayeed Madin Shah, and Sardar Samad Khan. ZoraWar Singh also had the advantage of the superior armament, military tactics, and discipline of his troops vis-a-vis the Ladakhis. What is more, the Dogras were invading Ladakh at the time of, what has been termed as, its deepest slumber.

All preparations having been completed Raja Gulab Singh now waited for a pretext for the invasion. He was in for good luck and the pretext was not long in coming. The Raja of Sant and Pashkyum had occupied some territory of the Raja Giapo-cho of Timbus and the latter had lodged a complaint regarding this with their lord Tse-pal, the Gyalpo (King) of Ladakh. The Gyalpo had, however, taken no immediate action in the matter leaving Giapo-cho dissatisfied and frustrated. ZoraWar Singh in Kishtwar had evidently not only kept himself abreast of the internal dissensions that were brewing up within the ruling families of Ladakh, but was also in close touch with some of them. So when the Raja of Timbus got no redress from the Tse-pal he found it quite convenient to ask for help of the Jammu Raja through ZoraWar Singh. This was a God Sant opportunity and Gulab Singh issued orders to Zorawar Singh to march into Ladakh. It is believed that before doing so he not only sounded his king and master at Lahore but also the East India Company (perhaps through the Lahore Durbar) to make sure that this action was not interfered with by powers that were in a position to do so. After receiving his orders ZoraWar Singh with his troops already in a state of readiness lost no time and immediately marched into the Ladakhi province of Purig (the estate of the THI Sultans) from Kishtwar in April 1834 with an army of four to five thousand men.

The Dogras entered the Ladakhi territory by the pass at the head of the Suru Valley. Bakra-Sis who was in command of the castle at Kartse in the Suru Valley quickly collected some 200 men at Kartse and moved up towards the head of the Suru Valley to block the Dogra advance even as he sent information of the invasion to the Gyalpo at Leh. He fought heroically for full two days against very heavy odds and in the end he

was killed fighting at alones with his son.

On receiving information of the Dogra invasion the Gyalso declared an emergency and issued orders for the mobilisation of his army. Under the existing law, on declaration of such an emergency by the Gyalpo, every family or house in the country was obliged to furnish one ~~ready~~ armed soldier at the call of the Gyalpo's government. For this each house was required to maintain, at all time, atleast one weapon; the weapons being match locks, swords, bows and arrows, shields and helmets etc. There were at that time about 22,000 houses in Ladakh which meant that the Gyalpo could muster an army of around 22000 men. However, sickness, guards at Leh and in the provinces, necessitated the absence of about 2000 men from the field. Not more than 2000 men in all could, therefore, have been mobilised for meeting the invasion.

On call to arms the Makim (solider) was told off as infantry and Cavalry according to whether he owned a horse(Pony) or not. The soliders had to find their own food. Each man was generally attended to by another male member of the his family who carried the joint rations and provisions on his back during the daily marches. The camp at the end of the march was pitched without any regularity and consisted almost entirely of black tents made of Yak's hair. As regards the command and control, the entire army was under the Commander-in-Chief known as Makpon, who was either the son of the principal Kahlon or a member of the Royal family. Other titles and ranks were conferred on the heads of districts and villages according to the numbers of soldiers that each was able to furnish. A Kahlon (head of district) who brought a few hundred was called Stongpon (Commander of thousands). A Goba (head of village) who could furnish 50 to 100

men was known as Gyopon (commander of a hundred or captain). An inferior Goba who supplied and commanded four to five men was styled Chupon (commander of ten). Discipline was enforced through the war law known as Makkhrim.

Although this ill-equipped and not too disciplined body of troops could hardly be called an army, it was quite capable of giving the Dogra invaders a rough time. For one, the Ladakhis had the advantage of numbers, and second, they had terrain and climate on their side. Besides, while in Eastern Ladakh defence was entrusted to the unwarlike monks assisted by a few armed peasantry, the defence arrangements in Western Ladakh, through which the route of the Dogra invasion lay, were much stronger. Here the defence was entrusted to a number of petty chiefs belonging to this area, who, besides being more warlike, had their well defended castles or forts to fight from[8].

On completion of part mobilisation, Tsepal rushed a 5000 strong contingent, under Dorje Nam-gyal (the young Minister of Stog) to Sunku, to meet the Dogra advance. So when the Dogras reached Sunku on 16th August 1834 they found their passage blocked by the Ladakhis, who had taken up a defensive position on top of a hill dominating their route of advance. Soon fighting broke out which continued the whole day before the Ladakhis were routed. The Ladakhis are believed to have suffered about 30 dead before they withdrew ~~from their defences~~ across the Rusi pass towards Shergol, under the cover of the night. The Dogra casualties were not too heavy, six having been killed and an equal number wounded.

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8. Jammu Archives, Mil Block G 270 of 1936 file no 80/0 /92-93.

The Dogras now advanced on Suru and occupied it. Here they halted for sight days to replenish and reorgainse themselves.[9] In order to win the goodwill of the conquered people, ZoraWar Singh prohibited his troops from cutting the crop which was then ripe. His politic conduct was duly reWarded immediately when the Zamindars came over to him in a body and not only tendered their submission but also placed themselves under his protection. With this was assured a regular supply of food to his troops, being made voluntarily by the locals. The Wazir then built a small fort which he named as 'Kila Suru Kursi' and occupied it. He also took over the unoccupied fort of Shakhar. To establish Dogra rule over the occupied territory ZoraWar Singh made a summary land settlement of the district and imposed a tax of four rupees upon each house. Small Dogra picquets were then stationed at various places to keep control over the populace. Having consolidated his occupation of Suru, ZoraWar Singh left 35 men in the Suru fort and another ten to guard the bridge over the Suru river and then advanced on Lang Kartse. Lang Kartse was easily occupied and here the Dogras took up a defensive position in which they spend the next one month.

MeanWhile the minister of Stog, who had suffered a defeat at the hands of the Dogras at Sunku, had reorganised his force and once again advanced to make contact with the invaders. Seeing the Dogras in a defensive position at Lang Kartse he decided to harass them rather than go in for a major action.

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9. Dr. Sukhdev Singh Charak p 78

For launching his main offensive he had probably decided to wait for two things to happen- the arrival of reinforcements from Leh which were already on their way and the setting in of winter which was also just round the corner. To wait for both would have been indeed wise strategy but Dorje Nangyal became impatient when a heavy snow fall signalled the arrival of Winter and without waiting for the reinforcements he made a daring attack on the Dogra defences with whatever he had. He had obviously miscalculated the Dogras ability to fight under wintery conditions and was killed along with 50 to 60 of his men as the Dogras rallied to meet the attack. The rest of the Ladakhis, demoralised by the Dogra action, fled across the Pashkyum river, skilfully pulling down the bridge behind them ~~in an attempt~~ to prevent pursuit by the Dogras.

Wazir Zorwar Singh who earlier was probably contemplating ~~earlier~~ to spend the winter months at Lang Kartse, now decided to pursue the fleeing Ladakhis. He was, however, not going to upstick from his firm base at Lang Kartse in a hurry. So remaining in the defensive position himself along with his mainforce, he ~~xxxx~~ pushed out only 500 men under Mehta Basti Ram in pursuit of the enemy. Mehta Basti Ram met with no opposition while crossing the Pashkyum river on inflated skins, as the Chief of Pashkyum on whom the command of the Ladakhis had devolved after the death of Dorje Namgyal, had fled with his force to the fort of Sod, where the intended to hold out till joined by reinforcements (about 4000 men), which the King of Ladakh had already despatched and were now racing towards Sod. The Dogras on the other hand were determined to capture Sod before it was reinforced. Advancing swiftly they reached Sod practically at the heels of the fleeing Ladakhis and laid siege to the fort. The fort was then subjected

to heavy battery fire for a number of days to force its early surrender. The defenders, however, held on to the fort with grim determination and showed no signs of weakness even at the end of ten days siege and bombardment. The Dogras whose rear was threatened by the 4000 strong Ladakhi army that was fast approaching Sod could not afford to wait any more and therefore, decided to take the fort by assault. The Ladakhis were unable to stand the determined assault of the Dogras led by Mehta Basti Ram under cover of accurate artillary fire, and after some reistance the Chief of Pashkyum surrendered along with 600 of his soldiers. The capture of the fort had cost the Dogras more than 40 killedand many wounded, but they had prevented the two Ladakhi forces from uniting against them. By the time Ladakhi reinforcements under Banka Kahlon arrived at Sod not only had the fort fallen but Wizir ZoraWar Singh had also moved upto the place from Lang Kartse with his main force. Banka Kahlon, therefore, thought it prudent not to make an immediate attack but to wait to for a more opportune moment.

While the Ladakhis were waiting like this, an interesting development took place which stalled the Dogra advance for nearly a month. It appears that the Gyalpe of Ladakh had already completed the mobilisation of his army but was now waiting for the winter to set in well and proper before launching his counter offensive. He had probably learnt a lesson from the disaster that befell the minister of Stog as a result of his premature attack on the plainsmen. He therefore planned to delay the attack and make the Dogras fight through ~~winter~~ the thick of winter. For this he needed about a months time and in a bid to gain this time he played a ruse, by which

even Zorawar Singh seems to have been taken in.

At the time of the Dogra invasion one Dr. Henderson who was known to be an eccentric, happend to be present at Leh. The Gyalpo made use of him not only to reassure his people but also to outwit the Dogras and induced caution into them to gain the required time. He detained Henderson under duress and made him to appear as the envoy of the East India company, who had come with an offer of assistance to the Ladhkis against the Dogras. The formation was conveniently leaked out to Zorawar Singh for whose consumption it essentially was. For once Zorawar Singh appears to have been outwitted by the Gyalpo. Holding further operation he apprised his ruler, Raja Gulab Singh, of the development and requested him for fresh instructions in view of the company's supposed involvement in Ladakh. The Raja in turn applied to the Maharaja of Punjab and it was well over a month before the Lahore Durbar could have the matter cleared with the East India Company and pass on their contradiction of the story to the Dogra General through the Jammu Raja. By this time, however, Ladakh was completely in the throes of winter and just the time for a Ladakhi counter offensive.[9]

The Ladakhi offensive finally opened with treachery. Banka Kahlon feigned a desire for negotiations and sent his envoys with this message to the Dogra camp. ZoraWar Singh who was not too keen to re-start his advance during the winter welcomed the move and, on a suggestion made by the Ladakhi envoys, agreed to send his own representatives to the Ladakhi camp for further talks. The Kahlon, however, had no intention of starting any dialogue and even as the Dogra envoys were

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9. Dr. Sukhdev Singh Charak p 78.

proceeding towards the Ladakhi camp, he with his main force was moving to the rear of the Dogras by a circuitous route. When the Dogra representatives for talks reached the Ladakhi camp, they were treacherously killed and thrown into the river, and before the Dogras could learn of this they were heavily attacked from their rear by Ladakhis under Benks. The Dogras were taken completely by surprise and many fell into the hands of the Ladakhis as prisoners; ultimately to be thrown into the river with hands and feet tied. The Dogras reeled under the impact of this sudden attack and ZoraWar Singh was compelled to retreat to Lang Kartse and there take shelter in the fort of the Thi Sultans. Strangely he was not pursued by the Ladakhis nor bothered by them any more during his stay at Lang Kartse for the next four winter months. Apparently although ZoraWars fer force had been thrown off balance these had been no routes such. The force was still in-tact and beyond the capabilities of the Ladakhi army, at that strength, to tackle.

While the Dogras lay low during winter, the Ladakhis utlised the time in swelling their ranks through fresh mobilisations. Greatly reinforced, they finally advanced on Lang Kartse in April 1835 while the countryside was still covered with snow. This time, however, they were in for a surprise from the Dogras. In a pre-emptive move the Dogras attacked the Ladakhis even as they were still planning their attack. The Dogras used their swords for effect and put the whole Ladakhi force to rout. About 1200 were taken prisoners. The total casualties suffered by the Ladakhis in killed and wounded is not recorded. It is only known that at least 400 perished due to fall of a snow bed alone done. The attack of the Ladakhi army was certainly broken and what remained of it now

retreated towards Mulbekh; while the Dogras moved up to Pashkyum for the second time.

From Pashkyum the Dogras made a speedy march to Shergol and thence to Mulbekh. On hearing of the Dogra advance the Ladakhis retired still further towards Leh; generally maintaining a two days lead over their pursuers. The Dogras were able to maintain a speed of advance as good as that of the retreating Ladakhis, because of the help rendered to them by the Purig Chiefs who themselves had scores to settle with the Tsepal. On reaching Mulbekh, however, the pursuit was discontinued and ZoraWar Singh halted here for 15 days, probably for administrative reasons. From Mulbekh he then marched to Kharbu and thence to Lama Yaru where he was met by an envoy of Tsepal suing for peace. A meeting between the King and Wazir ZoraWar Singh was then held at Bozgo wherein the terms of Ladakhi surrender were settled. At Bozgo the Wazir was escorted only by 100 Dogras under Mehta Basti Ram; the entire Dogra Army remaining at Lama Yaru. After about ten days stay at Bozgo the King and the Wazir moved to Leh where other formalities were completed. ZoraWar Singh then stayed at Leh for four months at the end of which he restored the kingdom of Ladakh to Tsepal. The kingdom hencefurth was, however, to be the vassal state of the Dogra kingdom of Jammu. The re-instated Gyalpo promised to pay, in return, an indemnity of Rs. 20,000.

After negotiating the final treaty with Tsepal Namgyal ZoraWar Singh withdrew to Lamayaru. Here he got the news that the Chief of Sod whose castle had been bombarded by the Dogras, had rebelled. The chief had marched against the Dogra fort at Su and put to death the entire garrison of fifty five. ZoraWar Singhrushed to Sod by forced marches but the rebels had by then

dispersed. He spent fifteen days at Sod sorting out matters and also gaining intelligence about the rebels. Then learning of a rebel concentration at Suru he marched towards it; reaching there in two days. The rebels were taken completely by surprise and thirteen of them were captured before the group broke up and fled. Then by announcing a reward of Rs.50 for every rebel soldier that the locals may hand over to him, he collected some 200 of them who were all beheaded and their bodies hung on trees for others to see and learn a lesson. After this the Zamindars of the district quickly tendered their submission and accepted the land settlement made by ZoraWar Singh.

This revolt was evidently engineered by Sardar Mian Singh, the Governor of Kashmir. With the occupation of Ladakh by the Dogras the shawl wool from Ladakh began to be directed to Punjab via Kistwar and Jammu resulting in loss of revenue to Kashmir. This was, however, not the only reason for Mian Singh's involvement. The usual jealousies among the Durbar grandees could also have been at play. There is not the slightest doubt that Gulab Singh had the approval of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in all that he was doing in Ladakh (including the diversion of the shawl wool) but even then Mian Singh carried on his clandestine activity against the Dogra rule in Ladakh, for some time to come.

After subduing the Chief of Sod, ZoraWar Singh left Suru and proceeded to Jammu in about September 1835. On the way he halted at Zanskar for sometime to make a tax settlement, which was fixed at three and a half rupees per house. On arrival at Jammu he reported his success to his Raja, who could not but have felt greatly elated at the achievements of his army.

Revolt At Leh

It was not long before another revolt took plance in Ladakh. This time the Gyalpo himself revolted, believed to be again at the instigation of Sardar Mian Singh. Tsepal imprisoned and tortured Munshi Daya Ram whom Zorawar Singh had left at Leh as his representative. This called for firm and immediate action and Zorawar Singh decided to surprise Tsepal by reaching Leh by a shorter and unexpected route, before the later could get time for mobilising his army. Having found a suitable guide in one Midphi Sata, (who was ~~heavily paid~~ handsomely paid for the job), Zorawar Singh took the direct route from Zanskar to Leh and reached Chumri, close to Leh, with his small force after a ten days forced march. It is not clear whether the Dogra force travelled on foot or by ponies. There is only mention of the fact that twelve seers of wheat flour and one bag of barley was carried on each horse which appears to have been the ration for one man and one pony for ten to twelve days. This and the speed with which the move was made suggests that the force (strength not known) had moved on horse back.

When the Gyalpo learnt of Zorawar Singh's arrival at Chumri it was too late for him to do anything about it and he thought it wiser to receive the Dogra general outside Leh in all humility; expressing regret at what had happened. But Zorawar Singh was not to be taken in this time. Besides extracting the remaining installments of the war indemnity from Tsepal he deposed him and installed Morupa Tadzi, (also known as Ngorb Standzin), the minister of Leh as the Gyalpo of Ladakh. Tsepal Namgyal, however, was allowed the village of Stog in Jagir. As a matter of greater security Zorawar Singh had a

fort built at Leh which was to be garrisoned by 300 soldiers under Thanadar Dalel Singh. Besides, in order to ensure good behavior of the new kind he took along with him his son and some other respectable people of Leh as hostages, when he proceeded to Jammu after making security arrangements at Leh.

The Second Revolt in Ladakh.

It appears that Raja Gulab Singh was not happy over the deposition of Tsepal and the instalation of a commoner, in his place and directed ZoraWar Singh to reinstate the former ruler at the earliest opportunity. This opportunity came within the same year (1836)[10] when news was received that there was a revolt in Purig (Dras/Kergil area) in which the new King had a hand. The revolt was engineered through one Sukamir of Purig and incited by Sukamir the people had murdered Nidhan Singh and slaughtered the entire Dogra garrison. There-after the revolt spread to other areas and Dogra garrisons all over the cuntry were beleagured in their different forts.

10.(a) There is much confusion about the dates relating to events that followed ZoraWar Singh's invasion of Ladakh in 1834, and different dates have been ascribed to the same event by different historians. All historians, howevere, agree that ZoraWar Singh first marched into Ladakh in 1834 and that Baltistan was conquerred by May 1840. There is also no dispute overthe date of Dogra invasion of Tibet in 1841. The dates that have been attributed to intervening events in this narrative are the ones that appear most likely in relation to the dates over which there is no dispute.

(b) According to Cunningham the Tsepal of Ladakh engineered the revolt in Balde (Padar) and had the Dogra thanader of the place killed and his 20 men made prisoners. Obviously Cunningham has mixed up Balde with Purig (Ka-rgil Dras area) and so have all the other historians (including Dr. Charak) who seem to have accepted Cunningham's version without reserve. Padar was at that time part of Chamba State under its own Raja and the King of Ladakh had nothing to do with it. What happened at Padar and Purig were infact two differsnt events unconnected with each other and not part of a single revolt as Cunningham had made it out to be. The story of the annexation of Padar is taken from the Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh- 1890 reprint 1974.

On hearing of these occurrences ZoraWar Singh quickly mobilised 3000 to 5000 infantry and set off for Ladakh once again. This time he decided to advance through Padar to settle scores with Wazir Ratun who had imprisoned twenty men of the Jammu army ~~who had been~~ stationed at the Chattergarh fort by ZoraWar Singh for securing the line of communication between Jammu and Ladakh passing through Padar. It appears that the Raja of Chamba of which Padar formed part was not averse to the use of his territory by the Jammu army for its movement to and fro Ladakh but Ratnu his Wazir at Padar was opposed to it and had acted on his own. ZoraWar Singh decided to use this opportunity for annexing Pader to the Jammu Raj and settling the issue once for all.

When ZoraWar Singh entered Padar with his army he found the bridge across the Chenab destroyed and this prevented him from attacking the Chattargarh fort immediately. While efforts were being made to find ways and means of crossing the turbulent river, a battery was deployed on a plateau over-looking the fort so as not to allow the Chattargarh garrison to feel too happy at the predicament of the Jammu army. It was than not before two months that a rope was got across the river a few miles down stream with the help of some local peasants and the Jammu army crossed over the river to be able to storm the fort. The fort was completely destroyed so that nothing but a heap of stones remained. Construction of a new fort, named Gulabgarh, was immediately started, symbolising the establishment of Jammu Raj in Padar.

After settling the affairs at Padar ZoraWar Singh marched his army over the hills into Zanskar. His route lay over the 18000 ft high pass which connects Padar with Zanskar. It was probably the month of October when, on the Zanskar side, the Dogra

army had to march over a glacier extending from the pass down to about 14500 above sea level. Consquently during this march 25 men died of severe cold and ten lost their hands and feet due to frost bite.

The army halted at Suru for two months for sorting out the rebels there and then moved against Sukamir in the Dras-Kargil area. It was not long before Sukamir was captured and his right hand and tongue were cut as a punishment for slaughtering the Dogra garrison. Simultaneous to the action in the Dras-Kargil area, ZoraWar Singh despatched Raj Singh and Mian Tota with about a thousand men to Leh to deal with the Gyalpo. On getting news of the Dogra advance on Leh, Ngrub Standzin fled to Spiti but the Dogras followed him there and after a skirmish with his guards, in which both sides lost six to seven men, they were able to capture him and bring him back to Leh. ZoraWar Singh in the meanwhile had arrived at Leh, and in accordance with the wishes of Raja Gulab Singh he deposed Standzin and reinstated Tsepal Namgyal as the Gyalpo of Ladakh on old terms. After inspiring awe in the people of Leh, Dras, Kargil and Zanskar, ZoraWar Singh returned to Jammu probably in spring 1837.

Rebellion in Poonch.[11]

The Sikh reverses in PeshaWar and the death of the great Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa in June 1837 had induced in the hill tribes of Poonch a hope of being able to shake off the Yoke of the Jammu rule. This hope was strengthened by the prevalance of a rumour that Gulab Singh had been badly wounded in one of the

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11. Based on the account contained in Gulabnama by Diwan Kirpa Ram, translation by Dr. Sukhdev Singh Charak, pp 156-63.

Skirmishes with the Yusufzais while he was engaged in subduing them on behalf of the Sikh Durbar. The whole country of Poonch, from the Pir Panjal Range on the north to the plains in the south, and from the Principality of Rajouri on the east to the Jehlum on the west, rose in rebellion against the authority of the Jammu Rajas. Raja Gulab Singh, being away from Jammu on his operational task against the Yusufzais, could do little about the rebellion and with the free hand that the rebels got thus, they had, in less than a month, captured and destroyed all the forts and strong-holds of their rulers in the entire area from Poonch to almost the walls of Jammu itself, and from the border of Kashmir to the base of the hills. The only consolation for the Jammu Rajas was that the Poonch fort was still holding out. The leader of the insurgents was Shamas Khan, one of the headmen of the Sudhan tribe. Ironically he had been kept about the person of Raja Dhyan Singh as sort of a hostage to ensure the fidelity of his clan and family. The Willy Shamas had in course of time gained the confidence of Raja Dhyan Singh, whose Jagir Poonch was, and thus risen to power which he clevery utilised in organising the rebellion.

It was not till about the end of 1837 that Raja Gulab Singh and his son Mian Udham Singh (who had accompained his father during the operations), returned to Jammu after completing the mission against the Usufzais. Orders were then immediately issued for start of a counter insurgency operation against the Poonch rebels. Mian Udham Singh was made the over all commander of the army that was to be employed for the task and Wazir Zorawar Singh and Mian Labh Singh reported to him with their troops in the vicinity of the Kotli fort which had been

besieged by the rebels. According to one source 8000 regular infantry and some 12000 irregulars were assembled for the operation under Mian Udham Singh. Raja Gulab Singh himself camped at Mang where a strong fortification was raised for the security of his headquarters.

On appearance of the troops at Kotli the rebels lifted the siege of the fort and fled. There after the rebels were given no respite, being chased from one hide-out to the other. Many prisoners were taken each day and these were expeditiously despatched to Mang for being tried and punished by the Raja himself. Very severe punishments, such as cutting off of limbs or torturing the rebel to death, were inflicted on the prisoners to frighten into submission those who continued to fight. The Raja, however, seems to have taken special care to ensure that the wives and the children of the rebels were not harmed.

After six or seven days at Mang, Raja Gulab Singh alongwith Mian Udham Singh moved to Bagh and establish a camp there, which was again strongly fortified. Zorawar Singh and Labh Singh also closed on to Bagh but by different routes; clearing the country-side of insurgents as they moved alsong. At Bagh it was learnt that Shamas Khan had taken shelter at Sadrun. Consequently Gulab Singh issued a farman to Sher Baz Khan father of Raja Sarandaz Khan, ~~Sher Baz Khan then guided~~ Sadrunia ordering him to render help in the Capture of Shamas Khan. Sher Baz Khan then guided the troops to the hide-out of Shamas at Sadrun. Shamas was capatured and put to death; his severed head being sent to Raja Gulab Singh at Bagh. The insurgancy had thus been stamped out and after appointing capable men to the various posts of Thanadars and Kardars under the overall administrative control of Diwan Dilbag Rai, Gulab Singh left for Jammu via Rajouri.

Invasion of Baltistan.[12]

It was as early as 1835, immediately after the conquest of Ladakh, that the opportunity had presented itself for the invasion of Baltistan. Mohammad Shah, the disinherited son of Ahmed Shah, the Raja of Skardu in Baltistan, had then met Zorawar Singh at his camp at Suru and sought Dogra help against his father. At that time although the conquest of Skardu and with it the entire Baltistan fitted into Gulab Singh's general policy of territorial expansion in these areas of power vacuum, he was restrained from under-taking the venture for two main reasons. One was that the Ladakhi conquests had yet to be consolidated and the second that Ahmed Shah of Skardu was known to be hobnobbing with the British and it was not yet clear as to what the British stand would be in case these territories were invaded. Consequently Zorawar Singh had pacified the prince at that time with promises of assistance in the future. To cultivate the friendship of the prince, however, arrangements for his safe stay at Suru and Leh had been made and these he utilised for the next two years. After that in an effort of reconciliation with his father, Mohammad Shah had left Leh and gone to Skardu. When nothing came off these efforts the prince again fled his country in early 1839 and sought Dogra protection at Leh. Realising the dangerous potentialities of his son joining hands with the Dogras Ahmad Shah sent fifty men after him, who in connivance with the Gyalpo's intriguing ministers siezed the prince and took him back to Skardu.

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12. Constructed from information contained in the Indian Conquest of Himalayan Territories by Dr. Sukhdev Singh Charak.

By this time Ladakh was under the firm control of the Dogras and British having made it abundantly clear that they had no intention of interfering in the affairs of these Himalayan territories Gulab Singh was now in a position to take a serious note of the affront that had been caused to his authority by Ahmed Shah and use the incident as a pretext for invading his territory. Plans for the invasion must have already been made and what was now required, in fact, was the giving of the green signal to ZoraWar Singh who had probably been enthusiastically waiting for such an opportunity.

It appears that ZoraWar Singh had to take out another expedition to Ladakh in 1838 before the Ladakhi's finally accepted the Dogra rule. As a matter of fact he was still in Zanskar in connection with this last expedition when he received his orders for the invasion of Balti territory. By then, however, he had not only rooted out all sources of uprisings and revolts amongst the Ladakhis but also won over the conquerred people by associating them with the administration of their land. It was perhaps thus that he was able to enlist considerable support of the Ladakhi's for his campaign against the Baltis. Besides, Baltis were an old enemy of the Ladakhis who had mostly had an upper hand in the numerous wars that had been fought between the two in the past. The Ladakhis, therefore, must have been thrilled at the thought of avenging their past defeats and they volunteered in thousands to accompany ZoraWar Singh in his expedition to Baltistan. So much so that even the old Gyalpo was induced to accompany.

The invading army was organised into two columns. The Ladakhi column, six to seven thousand strong, under Banka Kahlon and the Dogra column under ZoraWar Singh himself. The two columns

were to advance on Skardu along two different axis- the Ladakhi column along the Hanu-chorbat- Khapalu-Gol axis and the Dogras along the Moral-Kharmang-Gol axis. It appears that both the columns moved together along the Leh-Marol track on the right bank of Indus upto Hanu. Thereafter the Ladakhi column was placed under the supreme Command of a Dogra Officer Mohmd-din-Shah and directed towards the Chorbat La, while ZoraWar Singh, after moving along the right bank for some time, crossed over to the left bank[13] at Gar Gono and made for Pasrikhar in the Saut district to deal with some rebles there before advancing on Skardu. With a view to secure his rear he annexed the entire Purig territory to the Jammu dominion and appointed thanadars at Suru and Dras with strong Dogra pickets under them. Thereafter, he marched his column towards Marol.

Baltistan is composed of enormous mountain chains or masses of mountains. While 13000 ft and 20000 ft about sea level are common heights, there are in the north-easterly parts peaks rising as high as 26000 ft. This give rise to the largest known galciers outside the Aretic regions. Of the valleys the most important are the Indus valley and the Shyok and Shiggar valleys that join it. This mountainous country on the West of Ladakh was an ancient kingdom comprising of tiny principalities under hereditary chieftans owing fealty to the ruler of Skardu. Rondu and

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13. Dr. Sukhdev Singh Charak, quoting Hushmat Ullah writes that ZoraWar Singh crossed over to the right bank of the Indus. This appears incorrect as Purig territory towards which the Dogras were heading lies to the south of the river (across the left bank).

Shigar principalities lay to the North; Skardu, Khapalu, Parkuta, Tolti, Kharmang to the East and North-East; and Astore to its West. The impassable mountain chains, abyssmal gorges, precipitous nature of the terrain and the extreme cold gave enough security to the Baltis against invaders from the plains even without having to do much fighting themselves. Adding to this sense of security was the invincible nature of the Skardu Fort.

As soon as Ahmed Shah heard of the Dogra invasion he took prompt steps to block both the axes. He raised a contingent from Kurru and Khapalu and despatched it to Chorbat under ~~young~~ yostrung ~~strung~~ Karim and directed the contingents of Rondu and Kharmang to march under the Badopa Wazirs, Ghulam Hussan and Ghulam Hussain to Marol area to block ZoraWar Singh's advance. This army of the Badapa Wazirs, estimated by some to be about 20000 strong, set up its camp at a high plateau above Marol village before ZoraWar Singh's arrival at Cheche-Thung where he had to cross over to the right bank[14] to get to Marol village.

The Baltis had destroyed the bridge at Cheche-Thung and the Dogra advance was delayed for many days while they looked for a suitable place for crossing the Indus. It was not probably the month of December 1839 and the Dogras unable to cross the River were faced with, desolation, extreme cold, run down provisions and

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14. Here again there is some confusion about the left and the right banks of the River. Cuningham, and all the Writers after him (including Dr. Charak) believe that ZoraWar Singh was stuck up on the right bank of the River as he was wanting to cross over to the left. This ~~again~~ appears incorrect as ZorWar Singh after annexing Purig (Kargil), which is on the left side of the River was proceeding towards Marol which is located on the right bank of Indus. There can therefore be no doubt that the Dogra were held up on the left bank and not the right.

an enemy that got stronger and bolder each day.[15] The situation for the Dogras was now desparate and the morale and discipline of the soldiers began to be seriously affected.

Just as all looked lost, the situation was saved by the energy and initiative of Mehta Basti Ram. Taking out a detatchment of about 40 men he reconnoitered several miles of the left bank of the river while he kept up a smart fire upon the Baltis on the opposite bank to distract their attention. During this reconnaisance Basti Ram found a place where the river was forzen sufficiently thick to bear a man's weight along its entire width except over a gap of some twenty feet in the middle where the ice was thin and did not allow walking on it. Under the guidance of some Dards accompanying the party, work was started during the night on the construction of an ice bridge over the weak middle portion of the river with logs obtained locally. By 5 a.m. in the morning the logs had frozen in an crustation of ice of sufficient thickness to permit the men to walk over it. This ice bridge had been constructed just

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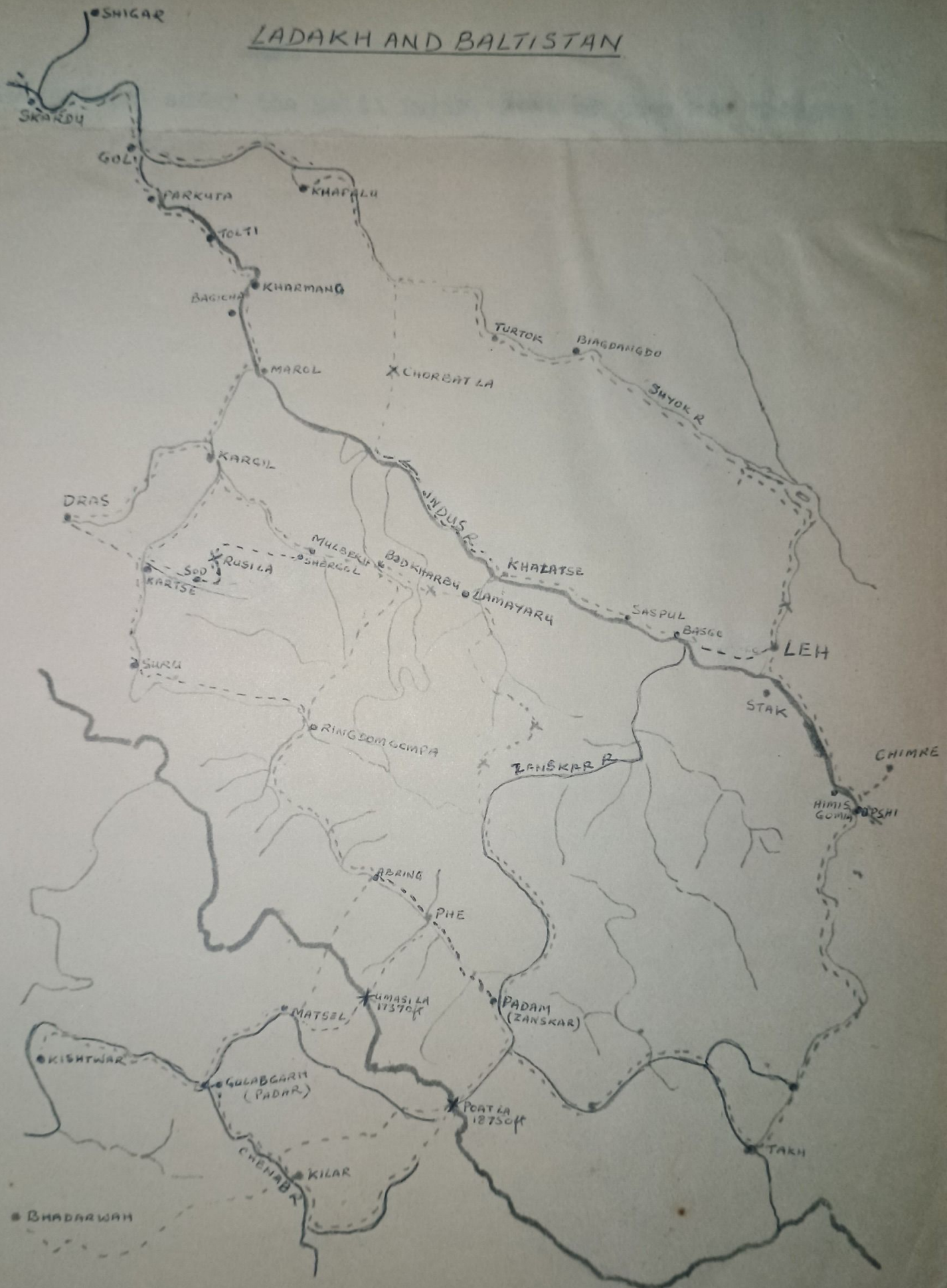
15. According to Cunningham (accepted by Dr. Charak) ZoraWar Singh in desperation detachedMain Nidhan Singh with a force of some 5000 men and sent him out to look for an alternative route by way of Shigar and to collect provisions which had now become very scarce in the Dogra camp. But the Baltis kept a good look out and had early intelligence of this movement. Mian Nidhan Singh was allowed to advance unmolested for about fifteen miles when his force was surrounded by thousands of Baltis and cut up nearly to the man. Nidhan Singh himself was killed and only about 400 men managed to find their way back to the Dogra camp. This story does not however sound plausible. For one, although Cunnigham believed that ZoraWar Singh had 15000 Dogras under him, the Dogra force could not have been more than 5000, the maximum Dogra strength that ZoraWar Singh ever employed in his other campaigns in the region and with 4600 men killed the Dogra force would have beentoo crippled to undertake any further operations. Secondly Cunningham's reference to Shigar could not have been to the Shigar territory north of Skardu but most likely to the Shigar river which flows into the Kargil region. It is therefore difficult to believe that the Baltis, who were holding defensive positions in the Ma-rol region North of the river, could have crossed over to the southern side in such great numbers as to annihilate a Dogra force 5000 strong.

below the Marko-la above which WazirGhulam Hassan had entrenched his army to bar the Dogra advance.

As soon as the bridge was ready Zorawar Singh ordered Basti Ram to cross over it with his men and hold the other bank of the river till he was able to bring up the main force. Basti Ram's men had, however, been so benumbed and exausted by their night's work that not many of them were in a fit state to fight. Ten of them had lost use of their hands and feet and eighteen just could not carry themselves through the deep snow and Basti Ram was able to lead only twelve men across to hold the bridge-head. It goes to the heroism of Basti Ram and his twelve men that they hold on to the other side of the bridge against successive attacks by the Baltis, till joined by the main force. Thereafter in the battle of Thamo Khan that followed the Dogras fell upon the Baltis with a vengence killing 200 of them and wounding a hundred. The retreating Baltis were then pursued upto Marwan and those that were over taken were slaughtered. About a thousand Baltis in all were believed to have been killed in this fighting while the Dogras losses were twenty five killed and fifteen or so wounded. The Dogras, however, had about 500 men, more or less, disabled due to loss of hands and feet during the long exposure to the snow and frost. The heroes of the battle had indeed been Basti Ram and party who had enabled the force to cross the Indus and they were suitably rewarded by Zorawar Singhwhen the Dogras camped for the night at Marwan.

The next battle of any consequence between the Dogras and the Baltis was fought at Bamza Gond near Kharmang. Here again the Baltis were routed and forced to withdraw further north. This battle happened to be the last before the final battle that was to take place at Skardu. Zorawar Singh's victories had caused

LADAKH AND BALTISTAN



dissentions among the Balti Rajas. Most of them now thought it prudent to submit to the Dogras and retain their possession rather then oppose him and lose all. One by one they began to desert Ahmed Shah and join the Dogras; some leading their contingents direct in the service of the victors rather than putting up even a semblance of resistance. Zorawar Singh halted for a few days at Khammang to receive submissions of the chieftains and then advanced to Gol where it was joined by the Ladakhi column as planned. Interestingly the Ladakhi column had reached Gol without firing a single shot. True that Ahmed Shah had despatched his wazir Yostrung Karim to block the Ladakhi advance at Khapalu but when the Raja of Khapalu declared himself for the Dogras Yostrung withdrawn to Kuru and there delayed the Ladakhi advance for four days. However by the time the Ladakhis could attack, the Dogra column had reached Purkuta, threatening Yostrung's rear. Un-nerved Yostrung withdraw his army to Gol and thence to Skardu.

The united Dogra- Ladakhi force now advanced from Gol towards Skardu. With nearly all other Rajas of Baltistan having submitted to the Dogras, Raja Ahmed Shah and his Wazir Yostrung Karim were left all to by themselves in the defence of Skardu. They, therefore, had no alternative but to shut themselves up in the Skardu fort, known for its invincibility. The strength of the fort lay in its location which was on a lofty unassailable rock. It had only two gates of entry, one on the east side which was used for daily traffic and the other on the west from which a covered path descended ~~down~~ to a spring, and further down to the river, which was used for bringing up water. The main path leading to the fort on the east was narrow, zigzag and with steep gradient. Besides, the entire length was effectively covered by

fire from positions in the fort. On the higher part of the rock was a smaller fort which over-looked the main one.

On reacing Skardu the Dogras laid siege to the fort and waited for fifteen days in the hope of forcing the garrison to surrender. When even at the end of this period, the defenders showed no signs of any such intention, Zorawar Singh decided to take the fort by assault. However, as a frontal assault on the main fort would have been suicidal he set about it through a tactical manoeuvre. On a dark night the Dogras stole round from their position in front of the main fort to the south western corner of the rock where stood the smaller fort. The Balti guards at the small fort were completely surprised and were all killed before any one of them could raise an alarm. This fort was, therefore, captured with little or no fight. In the morning the Dogras were firing from this dominating position into the main fort with a great advantage. The main fort thus became untennable and after two or three hours of a hopeless fight Ahmed Shah surrendered. Though tatical acumen and boldness, the Dogras had thus achieved in a days action that would have, through the process of blockade and starvation perhaps taken many months. What is more the Dogras had suffered no casualties in the operation.

After the fall of Skardu those few Balti chiefs who had not yet made their submission to the Dogras now hastened to do so. Only the Rajas of Rondu and Astore failed to present themselves before ZoraWar Singh. Consequently the Wazir sent a column comprising one thousand Dogras under Mirza Rasul Beg and Mohmmad Khan and a Balti army under the chief of Kharmang, to force Raja Ali Khan of Rondu into submission. There was, however

no requirement for the use of force as the Raja, surrendered at the very sight of such a large force. He was reinstalled in his position by Zorawar Singh after he had payed war indemnity, as fixed by the Wazir. After thus obtaining the submission of the Raja of Rondu, Zorwar Singh sent a force of 500 Dogras supported by a native force under the command of Mohiuddin Shah to Astore for similar action. On seeing the Dogras approaching Astore, Raja Jabbar Khan shut himself up inside his fort. The siege lasted twenty days at the end of which the Raja was compelled to surrender due to shortage of water inside the fort. Jabbar Khan, when led to the presence of ZoraWar Singh, refused to submit and was made a prisoner. In the meantime, however, the Sikh Governor of Kashmir profered a prior claim over Astore and obtained the release and restoration of the Raja through the intervention of the Lahore Durbar.

By the summery of 1840 the entire Baltistan (less Astore) had been brought under the Dogra rule. Zorawar Singh ensured the permanent occupation of the area by the construction of a new fort at Skardu, and by garrisoning it with a Dogra unit. Construction of a strong fort was also started at Khardurung. Bhagwan Singh was appointed as Thanadar of the place with a picquet of 100 soldiers under him. Bhupat and Mukhtar Munshi were appointed to assist him. Ahmed Shah was deposed and his eldest son Mohammad Shah was made the Raja of Skardu in his place. After making these and other arrangements ZoraWar Singh broke up the camp and started on his return march to Leh. A large Balti Army, under their own Chiefs, which ZoraWar Singh had raised during his stay at Skardu (for his future conquests), accompanied him to Leh. He also carried with him Ahmed Shah and his favourite son as prisoners.

For his return journey Zorawar Singh took Khapalu-Chorbat-Nubra route. While at Khapalu the dreaded epidemic of small pox broke out which took a heavy toll of life, particulary among the Ladakhis. Unfortunately the disease took some very valuable lives, which included those of Banka Kahlon and the old Gyalpo of Ladakh. The body of Tsepal Namgyal was carried to Leh, which was reached some times towards the end of June. At Leh the last rites of the King were performed with royal honours and thereafter his ten year old grandson, Jigsmad Namgyal was recognised as the vasal king under the Dogras.

The War of Sucession at Lahore[16]

The start of the Balti campaign had coincided with the death of the Lion of Punjab, Maharaja Ranjit Singh(27 June 1839), and the sucessession of his aldest son Kharak Singh to the throne. Although Kharak Singh, being of weak disposition, was not quite a worthy successor of his illustrious father, the change was brought about peacefully largly due to efforts of Raja Dhyan Singh who retained his position of the Wazir or Prime Minister. Zorawar's campaign had therefore run smoothly without interruption. Kharak Singh did not, however, survive long and died on 5 November 1840 just a few months after the subjugation of the Baltis. The succession to the throne of Punjab might have been peaceful once again had not Kunwar Nau Nihal Singh, the only son of Kharak Singh, died on the same day in an accidental collapse of a stone arch-way through which he was passing while returning

16. Based on History of Jammu and Kashmir vol. I by Dr. M.L. Kapoor.

from his father's funeral. Mian Udham Singh son of Raja Gulab Singh who was walking alongside Nau Nihal Singh was also killed in the same accident. With the death of Nau Nihal Singh, who had no son to succed him, the issue of succession was thrown open to dispute. Maiji Chand Kaur the wife of Maharaja Kharak Singh acted swiftly and immediately assumed to herself the functions of a regent on behalf of the child that the Rani of Nau Nihal Singh was expecting. But this did not solve the issue as Sher Singh, a reputed son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, also laid claim to the throne and strove to gain support of the army for dislodging Chand Kaur from her position by force. There was also a third contender in Rani Jindan, the youngest wife of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who claimed regency on behalf of her infant son, (born a few months before the death of Kharak Singh) but the Rani not having enough supporters to be able to press her claim, soon left the field free for the other two. The Chiefs of Punjab now started siding with one claiment or the other and started working for the success of their respective candidates. This also caused a division among the Jammu Rajas and while Dhyan Singh sided with Sher Singh, Gulab Singh espoused the cause of the 'Mai'. To avoid an open confrontation on the issue with his elder brother, Dhyan Singh moved away on sojourn to Jammu while Gulab Singh, determined to prevent servant Sher Singh from forcibly occupying the seat of power, the Lahore fort, (~~with the help of the large portion of the army which he had already won over~~), inducted some 4000 Jammu troops into ~~the Lahore fort~~ it. Interestingly Hira Singh son of Dhyan Singh decided to fight alongside his uncle Gulab Singh.

The Lahore fort was besieged by Sher Singh on 14 January 1841 or so, and he called upon Gulab Singh to surrender. At this

Gulab Singh is said to have gone up the ramparts above the Hazuri gate of the fort, and shouted that "Rajput honour forbade a bloodless surrender". Sher Singh's artillery then opened up in full fury and while the Hazuri gate crumbled under its impact, his infantry charged through the battered gate. The Dogras, however, counter attacked killing 300 of the assaulting troops and putting the rest to flight. This was followed by a counter battery fire from the fort and a large number of Sher Singh's guns were silenced for good. Sher Singh's men then tried an ingenious method of protecting their guns from the fire of the defenders. Knowing that Dogra chivalry did not permit firing on women, they seized some 1200 of them from their houses and forced them to stand aroung the guns. The trick, however, failed as the Dogra substituted gun fire with rifle fire and being skilled marks-men, they fired so accurately that while nearly 200 of Sher Singh's gunners were picked out and killed only 19 women lost their lives in the process. As going got tough for Sher Singh, he sent for Dhyan Singh to open negotiations with Gulab +Singh. Hostilities which had lasted five days ceased on arrival of Dhyan Singh. Under the agreement that followed, Sher Singh was recognised As the Maharaja while honour and security were guaranteed to Mai Chand Kaur. The Mai chose Gulab Singh for managing her estates and looking after her security and other interests. She also entrusted her treasures to his care. Consequently when she decided to accompany Gulab Singh to Jammu to live the rest of her life under his protection all her treasures were also transported to Jammu.

Capture of Mangala Fort[17]

To the south of Kotli and Rajauri and in the outer hills bordering the plains lay the principality of Khari-Khariali which had been founded in the 16th A century by the Katoch Rajputs of Kangra, alongwith the principality of Bhimber. Mangala, on the left bank of River ~~Jehlum~~ Jhelum was the capital of Khari-Khariali. During the reign of Ranjit Singh Mangala fort was caputred by the Dogras under Rattan Dev after a long siege i.e. and thereafter the principality formed part of the Jammu Raj. Finally Maharaja Ranjit Singh annexed the territory to Punjab and right till the end of Maharaja Kharak Singh's reign the territory was governed by an agent of the Durbar. After the death of Maharaja Kharak Singh, Raja Gulab Singh sought permission of Mai Chand Kaur for the annexation of the territory to the Jammu Raj and this was duly granted. Consequently Gulab Singh deputed Diwan Hari Chand to lead an expedition for the occupation of the territory, but it was not before March 1841 that Diwan Hari Chand was able to march his army into Khari-Khariali. By then Sher Singh had ascended the throne but he does not seem to have opposed the move.

Diwan Hari Chand first led his troops against Sarai Aurangabad and occupied it after a short siege i.e. He then moved to Sukhchainpur fort and secured its surrender without a fight. Meanwhile a detachment of his force which he had sent against Kot Qandhari had also been successful in reducing that fort.

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17. Based on Diwan Kirpa Ram's account in Gulabnama as translated by Dr. Charak.

Diwan Hari Chand, therefore, now moved towards the only remaining fort at Mangala where Rae Dhanpat had prepared himself for opposing him. The fort was immediately besieged but the natural strength of the fort by virtue of its location on top of a steep rocky hill with the river flowing along its three sides, was a source of great encouragement to the defenders and they sallied out of the fort a number of times to inflict casualties on the Jammu troops. Diwan Hari Chand was, however, able to setup strong breastwork alround the fort which was gradually moved forward till it reached right upto its walls. The siege of the fort had lasted nearly fifteen days when Lala Gandamal the Kardar of Mirpur made the first assault on the tower covering the water source and destroyed it. With the water source of the garrison cut and the main assault about to be launched Rae Dhanpat hastened to surrender.

The taking of the Mangala fort had been a great victory for Diwan Hari Chand and he was duly honoured and rewarded by Raja Gulab Singh. Other Dogra officers who had contributed towards this victory were Major Bhag Singh, Jamadar Ram Singh Lala Ganda Mal and Bakshi Nihal Singh. Hazura Singh Thanadar and Murtza Khan Malkana were responsible for the accurate artillary fire that actually broke the resistance of the defenders.[18]

Mutiny in Kashmir

Just a few months after the accession of Maharaja Sher Singh, the Lahore troops stationed in Kashmir mutinned and murdered Mian Singh, the Governor. There-upon Gulab Singh was ordered to proceed to Kashmir with a body of 5000 troops

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18. Account based on The History of Reigning Family of Lahore by Major G Carmichael Smyth.

(nominally under the command of the boy prince Pratap Singh) and deal with the mutineers. On reaching Srinagar Gulab Singh opened negotiations with the mutineers when they showed their inclination to surrender before him. But hardly had the negotiations started when the mutineers launched a simultaneous attack on four of Gulab Singh's battalions. The treacherous attack took the Durbar troops by surprise but they soon rallied and forced the attackers to flee. By then, however, Gulab Singh had suffered nearly 230 men killed. The main battle with the mutineers was then fought on the Dhud Ganga. In the hand to hand fighting that ensued, though the Raja lost another 500 of his men, he was able to finally rout the mutineers who now fled towards the Pir Panjal Pass. Gulab Singh had anticipated that the fugitives would try and escape to the plains over the Pir Panjal and had, therefore, positioned some troops under Mian Jawahar Singh (another son of Raja Dhyam Singh) ~~with 4000 men~~ at the Pass ~~in advance~~ for intercepting them. Most of the mutineers were thus either ~~been~~ killed or apprehended. Mohiudeen was then appointed the Governor of Kashmir and Raja Gulab Singh marched his troops to Hazara where another operational task awaited him. The significance of this action in Kashmir lay in the fact that ~~the~~ at the end of it Gulab Singh was able to instal, as the Governor of Kashmir a man who was favourably disposed towards him and thus ~~not~~ not likely ~~to obstruct both~~ to create obstructions either in his consolidation of conquered territories ~~as well as in~~ or in the new conquests that he was about to undertake.

Dogra Invasion of Western Tibet[19]

In order to restrict Maharaja Ranjit Singh's territorial

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19. Accounts of the Dogra invasion of Western Tibet, Sino-Tibetan invasion of Ladakh and the reconquest of Ladakh and ~~in Indian Conquest of Himalayan Territories by SS Charak.~~ Baltistan are based on information contained in Conquest of Himalayan Territories by Dr SS Charak.

ambitions, the British had taken a number of steps, starting with the Treaty of Amritsar in 1809, which, in the name of 'perpetual amity' between the two powers, prevented Ranjit Singh from acquiring control over the Cis-Sutlej states, by fixing river Sutlej as the permanent boundary between the territory of the Maharaja of Punjab and that of the East India Company. In 1816 with the occupation of Kumaon, Garhwal and Simla hill states under the Treaty of Sagauli, not only had the British blocked any attempt on the part of Maharaja Ranjit Singh to advance in this direction but, in the act, had also placed a wedge between the Lahore kingdom and the Hindu state of Nepal to prevent their alignment for common territorial ambitions in that direction and subsequently in 1831 the British established a protectorate of the Amirs of Sind to limit Ranjit Singh's ambitions in that direction and finally through the Tripartite Treaty in June 1838 the ring round Punjab was more or less complete. The only direction in which the Sikh kingdom had been allowed to expand was towards Ladakh and Baltistan and if there was any chance of further expansion it was in this direction alone. The British factor apart there appeared to have been complete power vacuum in regions beyond Ladakh and Baltistan which fact, by itself, was temptation enough for launching another campaign in this direction

Of the two regions- Yarkand and Western Tinet- which were available to Gulab Singh for attack, the former appears to have been his target initially. Some internal disorders in the Chinese territory of Yarkand seem to have encouraged the Jammu Raja to advance in this direction. In the seizure of Punjab opimium by the authorities of that country the Raja had a valid excuse for the invasion. As a prelude Zorawar Singh, the Dogra administrator of Ladakh, called upon the Chinese government of Yarkand to acknowledge supermacy of the Sikh Government of Lahore. The

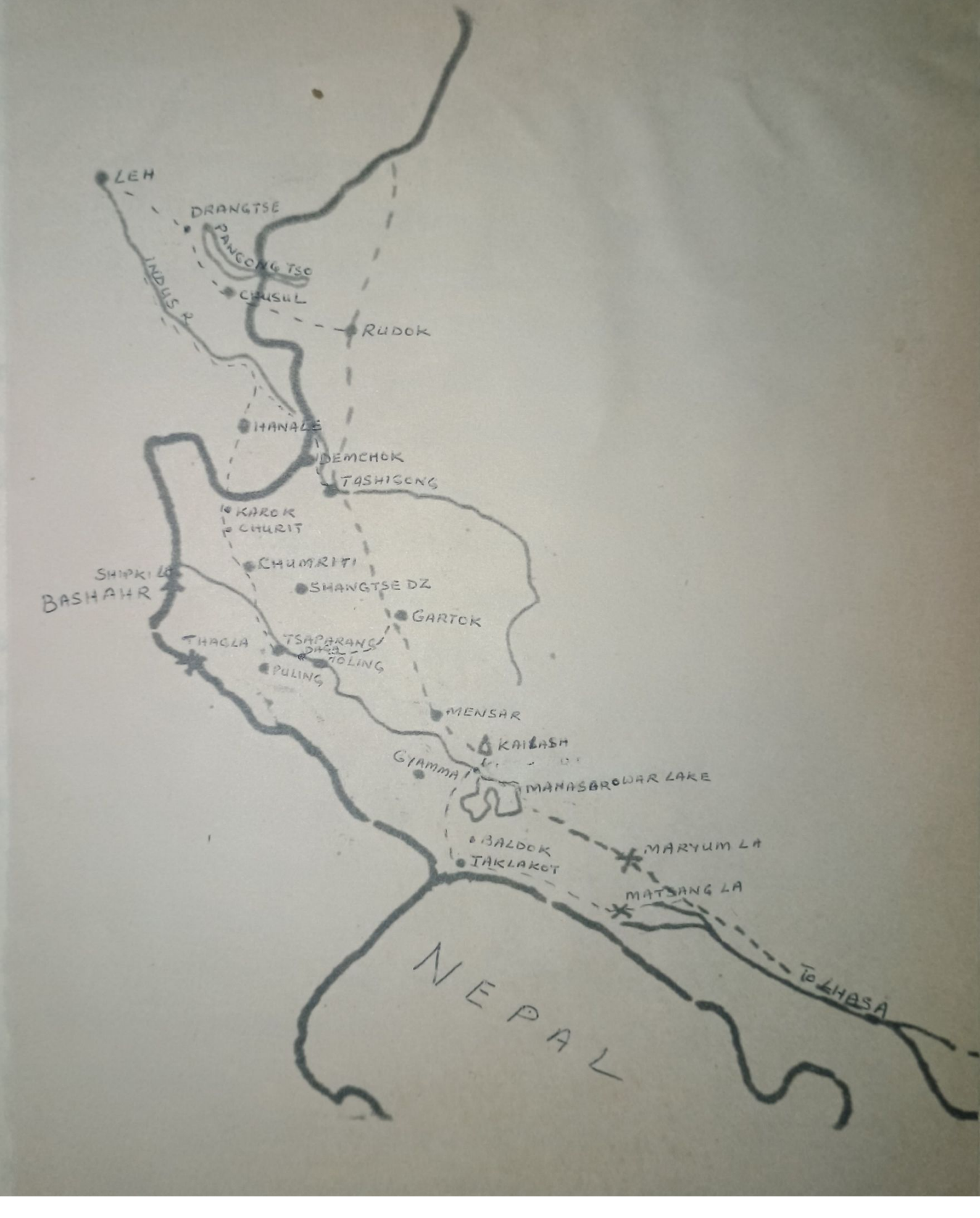
prospect of a Dogra advance on Yarkand, however, alarmed the British, who were then engaged in negotiations with the Chinese to end the Opium war. There was bound to be trouble during the negotiations if they allowed their ally to act against China as was being planned. The British, therefore, acted promptly and their agent at Lahore got Maharaja Sher Singh to ask his vasal Raja to abondon his designs on Yarkand.

Their advance into Yarkand having been forestalled the Dogras now turned towards Western Tibet. Various reasons have been suggested by historians for the Dogra picking on Western Tibet as their next target of attack. Some have called it plain and simple love of conquest cherished by Raja Gulab Singh and his general, Zorawar Singh, while others have attributed economic and stretagic reasons for occupation of this region; such as the benefits of the lucrative shawl-wool trade and the urge for breaking the British ring, (that was tightening around the kingdom of Punjab), by making the boundry of the kingdom conterminous with the friendly state of Nepal. Be it as it may Raja Gulab Singh with the backing of Maharaja Sher Singh was determined to annex Western Tibet to his dominion. He probably found moral justification in the fact, (if such justification was at all required), that this portion of Tibet had at one time formed part of the Great Ladakhi Empire. The occupation of Western Tibet by the Dogras was, however, as much against the interests of the British as would have neen their occupation of Yarkand. Apart from fact that Was Tibet was under the suzerainty of the Chinese Emperor who the British were at that time trying not to annoy, occupation of Western Tibet was by the Dogras would have put an end to the Shawl-wool trade between Tibet and British India through Bashahr. The Dogras had anticipated this opposition from the British and Zorawar Singh, therefore,

planned a blitz type of action that would take him upto the Mayum La before the British got time to react. The Mayum pass was selected as the first objective by Zorawar Singh for another reason. The only link between the eastern and western Tibet was through Mayum La which became totally impossible during the winter months due to snow, cutting off Western Tibet from Lahsa completely for about four to five months in a year. Zorawar Singh appreciated that if he could move fast and reach West of Mayum La just before the onset of winter, the pass would have closed before the Lahsa authorities had time enough to mobilise their forces and send them across into their western region. Then with no possibility of interference from Lahsa, he could so consolidate his position during winter as to make it difficult, ~~if period for consolidating his gains made earlier. Once so entrenched not impossible~~ if not impossible, for the Tibetans to evict him from the occupied territory in summer when alone they would be in a position to start their counter offensive. The appreciation was sound and his plan reasonably assured of success but the best of plans go awry due to unforeseen factors. How Zorawar Singh's plan miss-carried, we shall see presently.

After his return from Baltistan in June 1840, Zorawar Singh had spent the remaining part of the year and the begning of the next in preparing for his next campaign, whichever direction it might have been. In addition to his main force of about 4000 Dogras, he had recruited about one thousand Baltis and Ladakhi fighting troops and about 2000 camp followers from these communities. Supplies were procured and arrengements for their transportation made. After the direction of the advances was decided upon, preparations specific to the impending operation were started. The whole forces was organised into three columns - one main and two subsidiary. The main column comprised of the entire

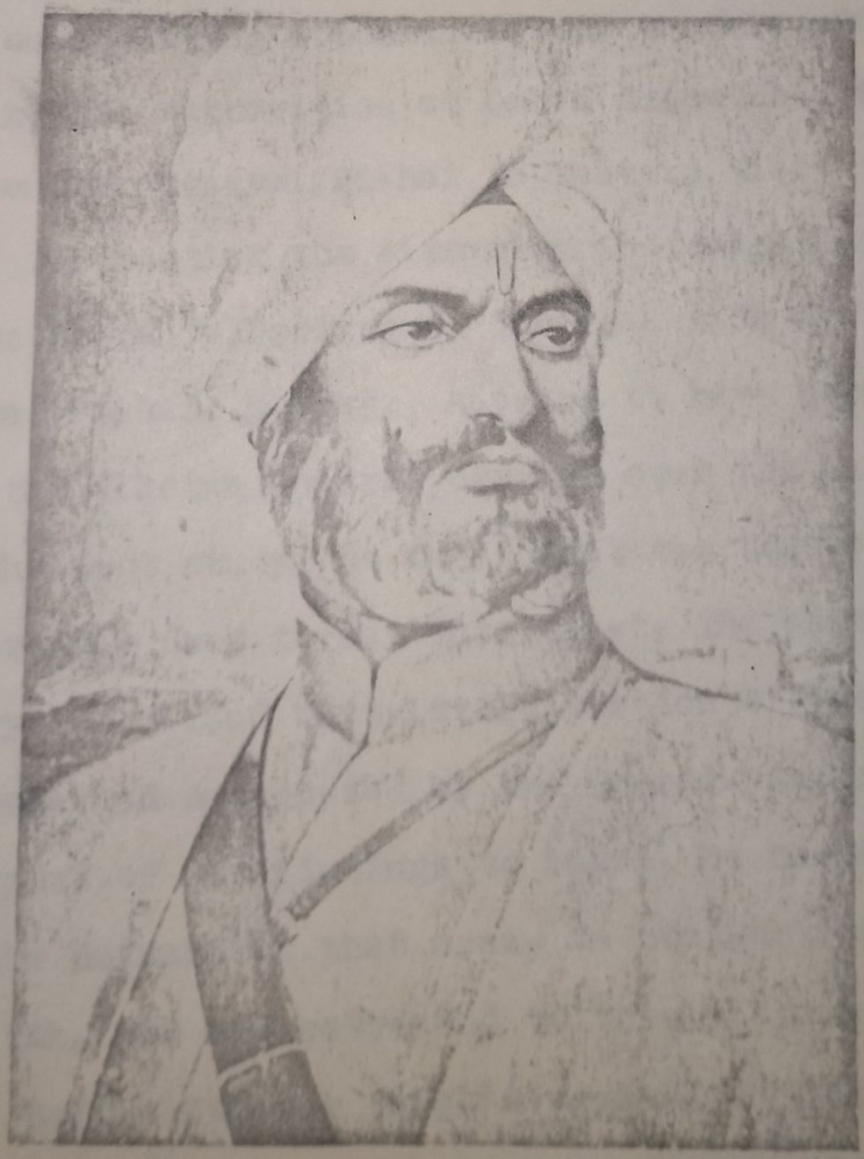
WESTERN TIBET



Dogra force under the comand of ZoraWar Singh himself and of the subsidiary columns one consisted of about 500 Ladakhis under Mono Sodnam and the other of the same number of Baltis under Ghulam Khan. The movement of troops towards the Tibetan border commenced in May 1841. As a coverup for the invasion, Zorawar Singh announced that he was proceeding to Mt Kailash and Mansarovar Lake on a pilgrimage and Tibetan authorities at Gartok were informed accordingly. The ultimate Dogra advance into Tibet was three pronged with the three columns making their entry at three separate places and at different timings. The first to enter Tibet was Ghulam Khan who advanced along the borders of Kulu and Kumaon towards Toling via Chumrti and Daga. The Ladakhis under Sodnam crossed over next, and moving along the Indus attacked and captured Tashigong. The main column was last to enter. Led by Zorwar Singh the Dogra column entered Tibet from Chushul area and advanced on Rudok which was captured by about 5th June. Zorawar Singh then advanced southwards towards Gartok. Short of Gartok he was joined by the other two columns and the combined force attacked and captured Gartok probably in the first week of July. Thereafter the three columns together advanced along the old trade route towards Tirthpuri (Mansar); While the Gonpo of Gartok and his troops fled ahead of them in the same direction.

ZoraWar Singh reached Dogpacha near Missar, a place which was just a day's march from the Mansarovar lake, on about 7th of August. The Gonpo of Gartok had by then been able to get a hold of his troops and finding his opportunity he attacked the Dogras while they were camping for the night at Dogpacha. Evidently the Dogras had been caught off guard and much confusion prevailed among their ranks for sometime, as they found it difficult

KAILASH PARBAT



Wazir Zorawar Singh

to distinguish the friend from the foe in the pitch dark night. The initial shock was however soon overcome with the Dogras adopting as the pass word "Jammu Raj Ki Jai", to be answered by "sitla Mata Ki Jai", and after some hand to hand fighting the Tibetians attack was beaten back. Besides inflicting heavy losses on the Botis the Dogras were able to capture the enemy "colours". The flag which the Dogras named as the 'Mantalai' flag is the proud possession of the 4th Battalion Jammu and Kashmir Rifles which claims its decent from the Zorawar Singh's force that fought this battle and captured the flag.

Although Zorawar Singh had tried to put the Tibetans off guard by announcing his intention to be that of a pilgrimage, they do not seem to have been completely taken in by the ruse. Immediately on receiving a communication to this effect from Zorawar Singh, the authorities at Lahsa despatched their officer-in-charge frontier, General Pi-hsi, to Western Tibet to make arrangements for meeting the situation that might arise as a result of the Dogra "pilgrimage". The re-action of the Lahsa government and Pi-hai, however, appears to have been rather slow. By the time the Tibetan General crossed over the Mayum Pass to make an on the spot study, he found that the Dogras had already made a dangerously deep thrust into Tibet. The best Pi-hai could do was to try and defend what little portion of Western Tibet that still remained unoccupied by the Dogras. Accordingly after sending a report of his findings to Lahsa, he hastened to Taklakot to arrange the defence of that area, in conjunction with the Gonpo of Gartok, who had retreated to this place after his defeat at Dogpacha. Before Zorawar Singh's arrival at Taklakot Pi-hai was able to mobilise about one thousand troops with the help of which he planned to hold out till the arrival of reinforcements

for which he had forwarded a request to Lhasa. He was however, unable to withstand the Dogra onslaught for that long and vacating Taklakot under pressure, he withdraw east of the Mayum Pass. Taklakot was then occupied by a Dogra force under Mehta Basti Ram by about the middle of September 1841, and with this all Tibet west of the Myum Pass was now in Dogra hands. Infact some 550 miles of Tibetan territory had been conquered by the Dogras in an operation lasting not more than three and a half months.

Pi-hsi's report to his Government, depicting the gravity of the situation had reached Lhasa on about 15 August. Consequently a large force under Kahlon Surkhang had been despatched to the aid of Pi-hsi from Lhasa on 29 August. As Pi-hsi now waited impatiently for these reinforcements to arrive to enable him to launch his offensive, ZoraWar Singh got busy consolidating his gains. He constructed fortresses in the Dogra fasion, at all the important places on his line of communication with Ladakh, such as Gartok, Rutok, Tirathpuri, Churit, Chumurti, and Takalakot and stationed Dogra garrisons in them. He also took steps for the pacification of the subjugated people by associating them in the governance of their land.

The British learnet of the Dogra invasion of Tibet sometimes in the middle of July 1841 and they immediately contacted the Lahore Durbar for confirmation and details. Maharaja Sher Singh and his Prime Minister, however, remained evasive in their replies in a bid to gain time for ZoraWar Singh to complete his task. Information regarding ZoraWar Singh's activities trickled out of Tibet heverthless, and the British, whom the Dogra Wazir had rubbed on the wrong side by ~~insisting~~ instituting measures for regulating the shawl wool trade through

Ladakh instead of British Indian territory, were obliged to initiate proceedings with the Lahore Durbar for the withdrawal of the Jammu army from Tibet. On the insistance of the British Maharaja Sher Singh is known to have issued the necessary orders but by then winter had set in and with all the passes closed communication with Zorawar Singh had become difficult if not totally impossible. Consequently the Maharaja's orders probably never reached him and, oblivious of what was going on between the Maharaja and the British, he worked on unhindered towards securing his position in the occupied territory before the Tibetan offensive which, he appreciated, could not be launched before the spring of 1842.

Even as these arrangements were being made, Zorawar Singh himself moved back to Tirathpuri where he intended to spend the winter months before the Tibetan offensive. While at Tirathpuri he took time off for a holy bath in the Manasrover Lake and offered a golden idol at the Kailash temple in fulfilment of his long cherished desire.

Kahlon Surkhang arrived at the head of his multitudinous force, east of Mayum Pass on the second of October. By this time the Pass had closed due to a heavy snow fall and the Tibetan army found itself stranded east of it. Every thing seemed to be going ZoraWar's way and knowing the strong position that he was in, he offered to vacate the occupied territory on terms so humiliating to the Tibetans that they rejected them off hand. But as things turned out Zorawar Singh had for once miscalculated and had not taken into consideration the Matsang Pass to the south of Mayum which was quite negotiable even during winter. The security of the Mayum Pass under which he was dictating terms was, therefore, false ~~security~~. This he was to soon realise when

descending from the Matsang Pass a strong Tibetan force surprised the Dogras at Gaklakot early in November and invested the place. The Tibetans then sent across more detatchments to surround the various other Dogra posts and picquets. A small Dogra garrison of about one hundred men under the command of AWtara at Karadam was overpowered and put to the sword.

ZoraWar Singh first heard of the Tibetian offensive on 17th November 1841. He, however, does not appear to have realised the gravity of the situation. He detatched a force of some 300 Ladakhi's under Nono Sodnam and sent it to Karadam to oppose the Tibetain advance. Sodnam made contract with the Tibetains on 9th November and straightway engaged them in a bitter fighting that lasted nearly twelve hours. But the Ladakhis being numerically quite insufficient were ultimately routed. At the end of the fighting the Ladakhi's had 95 killed and 86 taken prisoners. Nono Sodanam, however, escaped and returned to the camp alongwith a few of his men to report his failure to Zorawar Singh.

It appears that ZoraWar Singh was still not in complete picture regarding the enemy situation and continued to use his reserves hesitatingly and in bits and pieces. On 19th November he detached another force 600 strong, this time under the joint command of Sodnam and Ghulam Khan, but this force also proved too small for the Tibetian and soon got annihilated; Sodnam and Ghulam Khan having been made prisoners. Even then ~~Thereafter~~ Zorawar Singh held on to his reserves at Tirethpuri while the various Dogra posts continued to fight it out with the Tibetains as best as they could. These posts held out against enemy attacks for nearly three weeks but as more and more Tibetain troops were poured in, they began to fall one by one. Zorawar Singh, ~~however,~~

continued to maintain his defensive posture probably in the hope of reinforcements arriving from Ladakh, which he had sent for as soon as he had learnt of the Tibetan counter offensive.

The situation for ZoraWar Singh became desperate when the Tibetans, reinforced by some Chinese troops, captured Taklakot. By so doing the Tibetans had been able to create a wedge between ZoraWar's main force and the major subsidiary Dogra force at Chi-Tang under Mehta Basti Ram. With no hope of receiving immediate reinforcements due to the distances involved and all passes being blocked by snow, ZoraWar's only hope now lay in recapturing Taklakot and effecting union with Basti Ram's force at Chi-Tang. The Chi-Tang fort which was still holding out against repeated attacks of the Tibetans had been built by the Dogras with stone, on a naturally strong location, with the intention of using it as a fire base for operations in the area. This fort could now provide the much needed secutiry to ZoraWar's army during the winter months after which only could he expect reinforcements from Ladakh and Jammu to reach him. Consequently ZoraWar Singh broke up camp at Tirthpuri on 25th November and advanced to Karadam. From here he sent a detatchment under Man Singh to cut off the water supply of the Tibetan camp near Taklakot, but this detatchment was attacked before it could perform its task and forced to withdraw after having seven men and its commander killed. ZoraWar Singh then sent another detachment for the same purpose but that too failed. ZoraWar Singh now planned a direct attack with his entire force on 3rd December. He divided his force into five units and attacked in five waves, one after the other. The Tibetans were, however, far superior numerically and the Dogras were forced to fall back after losing thirty men.

Having failed to capture Taklakot ZoraWar Singh now

decided to force his way to Chi-Tang and join up with Basti Ram. As he reached To-Yo he found his way blocked by a strong Tibetan force under General Pi-hsi. The enemy was nearly 10,000 strong i.e., about three times Zorawar Singh's strength but what was worse, nearly all his troops were more or less frost bitten and many had lost the use of their fingers and toes due to exposure to the extreme cold during the past several nights. As a matter of fact not more than half of his men could handle their arms effectively. Despite the great disadvantage under which he was to fight, Zorawar had no alternative but to attack, if he was to be able to ever get to the Chi-Tang fort. Consequently on 10 December he personally led an attack on the strong Tibetan positions in a desperate bid to break through to Chi-Tang. In a bitter hand to hand fighting that followed 62 Dogras got killed and Zorawar Singh was forced to retire a little distance away and take up a defensive positon. During the night there was a great snow storm and snow accumulated in the camp to the depth of several feet. The Dogras suffered severly and some who had insufficient clothing even died of cold. They, however, held on dozzedly to their defences, against determined Tibetan attacks.

Unable to dislodge the Dogras from their defences by attacks, Pi-hsi used a stretegem to get the Dogra out of their defences, and make them fight at a disadvantage in the open. He withdrew his troops from the line of advance of the Dogras and deployed them in a large ambush in the vicinity of To Yo. The Dogras in their eagerness to reach Chi-Tang got taken in and on 12 December they recommenced their advance towards To-Yo on a route which looked clear of the enemy. Hardly had they advanced for two hours when they, most unsuspectingly, walked

straight into the enemy ambush. A furious hand to hand fight ensured in which some 200 Dogras and an unknown number of Tibetans were killed. ZoraWar Singh himself fell off his horse after being hit with a bullet in his right shoulder. The Tibetans made a rush for the prize casualty but the great Dogra hero held them back while wielding his sword with his left hand. Just then a Tibetan horseman came charging and thrust his lance through his breast; claiming the honour of killing one of the greatest Indian Worrior of the time.*

On the death of their General, the Dogra troops were soon thrown in disorder and they fled helter skelter. Some 600, including all the principal officers, were taken prisoners[20] while two large cannons together with their mounts and numerous muskets, swords, shields and other weapons fell to the Tibetans.

The Aftermath

Having annihilated the major portion of the Dogra force the Tibetans now turned towards the last few Dogra posts that were still holding out. The most important of these posts was the Chi-Tang fort held by 500 Dogras under Basti Ram and this received their prime attention. The fort was subjected to heavy bombardment from large guns which had arrived from Lhasa as reinforcements. The walls of the fort gave way under this fire but the Dogras clung to the battered fort and

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20. 106 such prisoners were allowed to return to the State at the end of 1856, probably through the good offices of the British. On arrival at Khatmandu, however, 5 died before they could be repatriated and 45 preferred to return to Tibet where they had married and reared children. So only 56 returned to the State (National Archives of India, Delhi Foreign Secret No. 6, of 22 Jan 1857).

* According to a legend the Tibetans, believing that Zorawar Singh was endowed with superhuman 'tantric' powers, shot him with a golden bullet and later decimated his body with a golden sword. General Zorawar Singh's 'Samadhi' erected by the Tibetans at Toyo village (5 Km from Taklakot) stands to this day as noted by Indian pilgrims to Kailash in October 1981 (Indian Express November 01 1981)

repulsed repeated Tibetan assaults. The fighting continued like this for nearly three weeks by which time the garrison had suffered about 300 men killed. With such a large number of casualties, and supplies totally exhausted, Basti Ram could hold the fort no longer. Consequently in the first week of January 1842 he abandoned the fort and led his men towards the British Indian border. He was ~~the~~ persued by the Tibetans and in the running fight many of his men were either killed or captured, before they could cross over to safety. Finally only 242 men including Basti Ram made it to Askot in the Kumon hills.

Even as the fighting at Chi-Tang was continuing the Tibetans had sent out detatchments against other posts that were still intact. As a first step they had cut the supply lines that were still functioning and killed all the Dogras engaged in the transportation of supplies. The posts were then attacked in overwhelming numbers and long before Chi-Tang was vacated all the other major Dogra posts had fallen. Most of the troops holding them had either been killed fighting or had been captured; while ~~while~~ some perished in the snow during flight. Thereafter a large Tibetan army went into action to exterminate all the other small pockets of resistance and to seek out the fugitives that may have been hiding in the country side. This operation was completed by the end of March, by which time all the Dogras had been flushed out of ~~the~~ Tibet.

Indeed a great disaster had befallen the Dogras. Of the total of about 6000 strong army (including the camp followers) that had entered Tibet not more than 1100 could have escaped alive and of these about 800 are believed to have been prisoners of war. Not only had the Dogras lost their greatest general but had also suffered great humiliation in that ZoraWar Singh's

severed head had been placed at a thoroughfare at Lhasa for the public to view. All this had been bad enough but what was to follow was even worse. Elated by their victory the Tibetans, with the backing of the Chinese, began to conceive plans for the conquest of Ladakh, which now lay defenceless before them. Among the prisoners taken by the Tibetans were the Gon-po of Ladakh and Raja Ahmed Shah of Skardu. The Tibetans now used these persons for engineering revolts in Ladakh and Baltistan respectively. Very soon both these regions were in the grip of a wide spread rebellion which was not within the capability of the small Dogra garrisons located there to control.

In Ladakh a large rebel army about 2500 strong, raised under the Gon-po entered Leh and declared Jisgmat-Namgyal as an independent Gyalpo of Ladakh. Simultaneously the rebels appealed to the Tibetans for help in ridding the land of the Dogras. At that time the Dogra garrison in and around Leh was about 300 strong. It was organised in two units-one under Thanadar Magna Whi Which occupied the fort and the other under Pehalwan Singh which was lodged in the Gyalpo's stables, after these had been duly fortified and strengthened for defence. Reportedly Pehalwan Singh had under him a Fatteh platoon under Subedar Tegh Singh.[21] After entering Leh the rebels started harassing the Dogra garrisons and tried to cut them off from each other. Desultory fighting between the Dogras and the rebels continued like this for several

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21. There is evidence to show that Fatteh was prefixed with the names of all the regiments of the Jammu army in 1858. But from the manner in which reference to the platoon of the Fatteh has been made it appears that in 1841-42 only one regiment was known as Fatteh. The reference is obviously to Fatteh Singh Shibji, the name that was given to the force that was raised specially to fight in the Himalayan territories, believed to be the abode of Lord Shiva.

days without the rebels gaining any success. Thereafter the rebels contented themselves with besieging the two Dogra posts and cutting off their supplies. Other small Dogra garrisons spread all over Ladakh were, however, easily over powered by the rebels and the soldiers were either, killed or captured. Of all the places in Ladakh Dras alone remained peaceful.

The situation in Baltistan was no better. The Chiefs of Rondu, Khapalu, Kurrus all opted for the cause of the rebels and declared themselves independent of the Dogras. The Raja of Shigar who hesitated was deposed by Haider Khan (the leader of the rebels after the death of Ahemed Shah) and his country was taken over by the rebel leader himself. In fact the only chief who remained true to his salt was the Raja of Skardu. Ultimately, however, he too was over powered by the rebels and interned in the Kwardu (Skardu) Monastry while his territories were taken over by the rebel chief Haider Khan. Bhagwan Singh, Thanadar of Skardu, along with the Dogra garrison, was imprisoned and moved to Nihali. Haider Khan then sought the security of his newly acquired territories by obtaining reinforcements from Nagar.

The Sino-Tibetan Invasion of Ladakh

In the meantime the Tibetans had responded to the request of the rebels for help and had despatched a large force from Garo to Leh. The force was commanded by General Pi-hsi himself, who is reported to have lodged himself in the Gyalpo's palace, where he lived in grand style. Pi-hsi's force was followed by a contingent of 400 Chinese but on coming to know that plague had broken out in Leh, the Chinese halted eight marches short of the town and camped there for some period before joining up with the Tibetans and the Ladakhi rebels.

Having found their strength on the arrival of fresh troops

the rebels now decided to attack the Dogra garrisons at Leh. The Dogras at both the posts, however, fought back fiercely and the enemy was thrown back with heavy losses. Greatly encouraged by their success the Dogras then sallied from their respective positions and attacked the besseigers from two sides. Hundreds of Ladakhis and Tibetains afe reported to have been killed in hand to hand fighting, and never again did the Tibetans or the Ladakhis get within a striking distance of Magna and Pehalwan Singh. As both sides now waited for reinforcements, a lull decended on the great Himalayan battle ground- a lull before the storm.

Re-conquest of Ladakh

Basti Ram's letter addressed to Raja Gulab Singh, which he wrote immediately on reaching Almora, giving details of the debacle in Tibet, was received by the Raja in the middle of February 1842, but news of the disaster had trickled down to him as early as the end of January. He was then at Barkakot in Hazara on his way to Peshwar for taking over command of the Durbar troops detailed for assisting the British in their Kabul expedition. The news of the disaster did cause some embarrassment and loss of face to Gulab Singh but the British, who had just then met with a matching desaster against the Afghans were hardly in a position to derive any sadastic pleasure out of the Dogra failure which they may otherwise have done. Be it as it may Gulab Singh naturally lost all interest in his Kabul mission and sought the permission of the British, with whom he was to cooperate under orders of Maharaja Sher Singh, to allow him to be replaced by some other General of the Durbar so that he may proceed to Jammu and arrange for the reconquest of Ladakh and Baltistan. The British

although appreciative of Gulab Singh's anxiety, were, however, not prepared to relieve him as they had little confidence in the capabilities of other Sikh military Commanders. In order to keep Gulab Singh on his job they offered to mediate between the Dogras and the Tibetans and have Ladakh vacated by the latter without resort to arms but Gulab Singh was determined to force the Tibetans out of Ladakh with his own strength so as to keep the British out of the affairs of his state. Gulab Singh was ultimately permitted to leave, in the begining of May 1842 after he had fully satisfied the British with arrangements for securing their interests in his absence. In the meantime his brother Raja Dhyan Singh had rushed to Jammu and marshalled an army, 6000 strong, for despatch to Ladakh under Wazir Ratnu and Diwan Hari Chand. This army included 700 of his own troops, 1400 of his son Raja Hira Singh and 1000 of Raja Suchet Singh's troops.[22] Being satisfied with the arrangements made by his brother, Raja Gulab Singh gave his blessings for the move of the force to Srinagar. At Srinagar Wazir Ratnu took over the over all command of the force and the troops began to be despatched to Ladakh by batches; each 500 or so strong. This move was spread over a period of about fifteen days. Wazir Ratnu and Hari Chand moved with the last batch.

Meanwhile on 31 May 1842 the Chinese Emporer had accepted the petition of the Ladakhis and Baltis seeking permission for pledging their allegiance to the Tibetan Shang-Shang, and immediately afterwards in June about 5000 Tibetan troops had left Lhasa for Leh. Simultaneously orders had been issued to all the Chinese troops located in Western Tibet to move to Leh. The show down between the Dogras and the Sino-Tibetan combine was now

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22. National Archives N, Delhi, Foreign Secret 34, 15 Fe 1843

inevitable.

While the Tibetans and the Chinese were advancing on Leh unhindered, the Dogras had to fight all the way through. Their route passed through territory the population of which was in open armed rebellion. In fact for Wazir Ratnu the advance to Leh practically amounted to the reconquest of Ladakh. He had to fight a major action against the rebels at Kargil. The rebels had invested the Kargil fort, (when the Dogra garrison was still holding out) and had taken up positions to block the road to Leh. Diwan Hari Chand sent a detachment under Jamadar Ram Singh to attack the enemy position from a flank while he made a frontal attack with his main force. As the two attacks were in progress, the Dogra garrison charged out of the fort and attacked the enemy from a third direction. A bloody battle raged for about three hours before the rebels took flight. About 200 of them were killed in the fighting and many more were swept away by the river through which they tried to escape when they found all the other routes of their withdrawal blocked by the Dogras. After forcing the rebels to submit at a few more places enroute, Wazir Ratnu reached Leh sometimes in the begining of July 1842.

At the very approach of the Jammu army the Tibetans and the Ladakhi rebels were terror struck and lifting the seige of the Leh fort they withdrew towards Rudok. Two factors appear to have contributed towards this undignified withdrawal by the invaders. One, that their reinforcements from ~~Lahore~~ Lhasa were still on their way, and the other that they did not dare to fight the Dogras without the advantage of winter. Be it as it may the Dogras did not pursue their enemy and instead decided to utilise the opportunity for stamping out the remaining traces of rebellion before taking on the Tibetans. They had sufficient time for both

before winter set in. Consequently Wazir Ratnu detatched a force, about one thousand strong, under Mian Jawahir Singh and sent it to Zanskar. Another 500 men under Mian Narainia were despatched to Nubra and many other detatchments big and small were similarly sent to various parts of Ladakh against the rebels. This naturally thinned down the Dogra strength at Leh and Bakshi Chhak-Jot, the leader of the Ladakhi rebels who had taken shelter in Rudok fort on arrival of the Dogra expeditionary force at Leh, thought the time to be most opportune for attack. He, therefore, detailed his brother Acchan-Jot to lead a contingent of one thousand rebels against the Dogras at Leh. As the rebels advanced from Rudok, Wazir Ratnu pushed out a strong advance guard under Commandant Sardul Singh and Munshi Ram ji Mal while he himself followed with his main force. The advance guard made contact with the rebels at Gompa Chamreh, some ~~20 kms~~ 10 Kroshs (about 20 km) from Leh, and after some fighting forced the Ladakhis to take shelter in the Chamreh fort. When the main force under Wazir Ratnu and Dewan Hari Chand arrived at Gompa, the fort was beseiged and a cannon deployed against it. The walls of the fort crumbled under the gun fire and on the fourth day of the seize the rebels sued for peace. Achhan-Jot was taken prisoner and the main force marched back with him to Leh, while Sardul Singh and Ramjimal were left behind with their contingents to guard the other prisoners. Ultimately these prisoners were sent to Kashmir and produced before Raja Gulab Singh who had by then moved up to Srinagar from Jammu to personally supervise the despatch of men and material to Ladakh.

We have already seen how the Tibetans had quietly slipped away from Leh towards Rudok on the appearance of the Dogra expeditionery force. When they reached Drangtse they were joined by the 5000 Tibetan troops that had been despatched from Lhasa to

Leh as reinforcements. However, inspite of being so reinforced, the Tibetans, over-awed by Wazir Ratnu's force, decided against an immediate offensive. Instead they decided to fall further back and take up a defensive position at Lung-Wu, an area on the Tibetan frontier between Rudok and Pangong Lake. Here they sited their defences in the lower part of a narrow valley on a naturally strong position which could not be easily assaulted and waited.

Although the Tibetans, had, in fact, vacated the Ladakhi territory and were now established just across the border, their intentions to re-enter the State during Winter, when they would be able to fight with advantage, was more or less clear. In any case a strong such possibility existed and the Dogras could not take the risk of leaving the enemy alone so close to the border. Wazir Ratnu, therefore, decided to fight out a decisive engagement with the enemy to eliminate the chances of his invading Dogra territory again. Accordingly during the last week of July, after the small operations against the rebels in and around Leh had been completed, the Dogras, leaving behind about one hundred men for the defence of Leh, set forth to make contact with the Sino-Tibetan force enterenched at Lung-Wu. Commandant Sardul Singh and Munshi Ram Raji Lal were again detailed as the advanced guard while Diwan Hari Chand brought up the main column.

By the time the main body reached Lung-Wu the advanced guard under Sardul Singh had already made contact with the enemy resulting in some fighting. The initiative was first taken by the enemy who attacked the Dogra advanced guard on the very first night of its arrival. The attack was, however, repulsed and the enemy was forced to seek shelter in his defences. On the arrival of their main force the Dogras went on to the offensive and charged the enemy fortifications with full force. The Dogras had

probably not realised the strength of the enemy defences and not only did their attack fail but they also got pushed back right to the edge of the Pangong Lake. A lull then descended on the battle field for the next four days as both sides licked their wounds. It was now abundantly clear that the enemy positions could not be taken by direct assault. So the Dogras set about it through a stratagem. Secretly they erected a dam upstream, which on 10th August caused the enemy positions to be flooded, and forced him to abondon his fortifications. Once in the open the Tibetans and the Chinese were no match to the Dogra swordsmen. After some resistance, during which many of them got killed and several were taken prisoners, the Sino-Tibetan force disintegrated and fled pell mell. It was some consolation to the Dogras that a large number of weapons of ZoraWar Singh's army were recovered by them from the Tibetans during this battle. The Dogras suffered a total of about 230 killed which included two junior officers. Indeed their losses had been great, but the sacrifice had been more than compensated by the glorious victory they had won.

Raja Gulab Singh must have heaved a sigh of relief when the news of the victory was conveyed to him on his arrival at Leh just after the battle was over. Although the Tibetans were apprehensive of the Dogras now invading Tibet, Gulab Singh had no such intention and being in a position of strength he asked Wazir Ratnu to start negotiations for a treaty of peace and friendship with the Tibetans. The treaty was finally signed on 14th September 1842. According to this treaty the traditional boundary of Ladakh and Tibet was to be restored. The Chinese and the Tibetans, while recognising Dogras as the legitimate authority in Ladakh, gave a guarantee that not only will they themselves not ever commit aggression against Ladakh but would also not harbour enemies of Raja Gulab Singh. They also agreed to carry on

their Shawal-Wool trade through Leh in accordance with the old customs. The Dogras on their part gave up all claim to Western Tibet.

Thereafter, for administrative and security purposes Ladakh was divided into five districts each under a Thanadar who exercised both military and civil authority in his district and was responsible to the Raja of Jammu alone. The five district were Ladakh(Leh), Zanskar, Kargil, Dras and Nubra. The number of troops in the Ladakh province was 600 to 800 men, of whom nearly 200, armed with match-lock guns, were stationed at Leh and around. The rest were spread all over Ladakh in the forts that had been constructed by Zorawar Singh. Also stationed at Leh was a battery of four guns well set up on substantial carriages and manned by 30 artillery men.[23]

Re-conquest of Baltistan:

Even as the Sino-Tibetan challenge was being met at Ladakh, Raja Gulab Singh had deputed Wazir Lakhpat Rai(Kishtwaria) for the reconquest of Baltistan which was nearly completely in the hands of the rebels. Consequently Wazir Lakhpat left Kishtwar at the head of a Dogra force, about 3000 strong, and entered Zanskar. On receiving this news the Raja of Zanskar fled and took shelter in Tibet. After re-establishing the Dogra authority in Zanskar the Wazir marched to Kargil and secured it before advancing into Baltistan. On approach of the Dogra force the various Chiefs of Baltistan hastened to make their submission. Beyond Kargil the Wazir did meet with opposition but this was easily brushed aside as he pressed on to Skardu where Haider Khan, the rebel Chief had shut himself inside the fort. The Dogras set siege to the fort which lasted for several days without the defenders showing any signs of weakness. As the

23.Jammu Archives Mil Block 'O'-27 of 1936 file 88/0/92-93.

fort, because of its naturally strong position, was difficult to attack Wazir Lakhpat decided to employ diplomacy for its capture. Raja Sher-Ali Khan and Raja Mohammad Shah, the two Chiefs who had always remained faithful to the Dogras were made use of in convincing the guard commander at the gate of the fort as to the futility of fighting the Dogras. The Dogras then entered the fort at night through the gate that had been left open for them by the guard commander, and surprised Haider Khan's troops inside. After some hand to hand fighting the garrison surrendered and by morning the fort was in the Dogra hands. Haider Khan taking advantage of the night and the confusion of the battle managed to escape but his freedom was short lived. Raja Daulat Ali Khan of Khapalu sent out his troops in pursuit and the fugitive was over-taken while he was fleeing to Yarkand. He was brought back to Khapalu where the Raja handed him over to Wazir Lakhpat. Haider Khan was taken to Jammu as a prisoner where he died after sometime.

After the fall of Skardu Wazir Lakhpat visted other principalities and obtained the submission of their Chiefs without much opposition. In most cases the principalities were restored to their respective Chiefs after they had submitted to the Dogra authority. At Skardu Lakhpat completed the fort the foundation of which had been laid by Zorawar Singh and appointed Bhagwan Singh as the Commander of the new fort with a garrison of 300 men under him. On his return journey to Kishtwar he set up garrisons in the forts of Kargil, Dras and Suru. In Zangskar he appointed Mehta Basti Ram as the Thanadar (in place of Jamadar Deenu who had been murdered by the rebels)

and placed a garrison under him in the newely built fort.

By the end of 1842 all territory conquered by ZoraWar Singh between 1834 and 1840 was, thus, once again brought under the firm control of the Dogras.

ARMY UNDER THE JAMMU RAJAS : 1842

For the security of their territories against internal and external threats the Jammu Rajas had constructed a vast network of forts. These forts were manned by their own troops independent of the Lahore Darbar. It is perhaps because of this that while the Jammu army has been shown as part of the Sikh army in old records the forts under the Jammu Rajas and the troops manning them have been shown separately. Apart from the newely constructed forts in Ladakh and Baltistan the Jammu Rajas are reported to have been in possession of some 35 forts in 1842. These forts were being manned by about 1800 troops. The strategically important forts had guns mounted on them; there being 38 big and 32 small guns (called Bumbooks) in all. The details of these forts are given at Appendix 'A'.[24]

There is no record of the strength of the army under the Jammu Rajas as such. However in the statement of the Lahore army for December 1842,[25] as prepared by the British agent, reference has been made to the troops under the command of the Jammu Rajas as part of the Sikh army. Here Dhyan Singh and his son Hira Singh are shown to be commanders of seven battalions totalling upto 4800 troops while Raja Suchet Singh is shown as commanding 2000 troops organised into two battalions. No reference in this statement is made to the number of troops under the command of Raja Gulab Singh. This is probably because he did not have any fixed number under him and had blanket permission of the Maharaja

24. National Archieves N. Delhi, Foreign Secret 34, 15 Feb 1843
25. National Archieves N.Delhi, Foreign Secret 941, 26 Dec 1846.

of Punjab to raise any number of troops on as required basis such as he raised for conducting operations in Ladakh, Baltistan and Tibet. It is perhaps thus that while no reference to his troops is made in the British assessment of the Lahore army in 1842 it is on record elsewhere that during this year he was in command of 5000 hill troops (meaning Dogras) when he went to the aid of the British at Peshawar on orders from the Durbar. It is also possible that his army (fore-runners of the J&K Rifles of today) had by now acquired a status independent of the Lahore Durbar and was therefore not shown as part of the Sikh Army.[26] To these strengths under the Jammu Rajas could be added two battalions under Rai Kesri Singh of Samba and one under Mian Labh Singh who owed allegiance to the Lahore Durbar through the Rajas of Jammu. When not employed in operations either on the Punjab frontier directly under the Durbar or on the Jammu frontier under the Raja of Jammu the troops probably remained located in and around Jammu. These troops formed the nucleus around which irregulars were raised in the hour of need.

Names and numbers of the various regiments and units of the army are not known. It is only known through Army Lists published during Maharaja Pratap Singh's period that two units that were ultimately merged into the Indian Army in 1957 were in existence in 1842. These were the J&K Body Guard Cavalry raised in 1823 and the Fatteh Shiv Ji Regiment raised in 1837. There was also in existence at that time a Horse Artillery unit which was ultimately disbanded in 1921 to form the 3rd J&K Mountain Battery.

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26. In the middle of May 1841 Maharaja Sher Singh had granted a 'Sanad' called 'Dharam Patra' to Raja Dhyan Singh, under which the soldiers of the Jammu Rajas were to, under no circumstances, be taken into service in the Lahore Army.

CHAPTER II

FOUNDING OF THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR STATE

At the end of 1842, when the Chinese and the Tibetan invaders had been evicted from Ladakh and the revolt in the newly acquired trans-Himalayan territories had been completely stamped out, it appeared that troubles of the Raja of Jammu had ended for ever. This was, however, not to be. The next two years were those of greatest trial and tribulation during which the very existence of the Jammu Raj was threatened. In this chapter we shall see how Raja Gulab Singh came out unscathed through the vicissitude, even as other members of his family fell one by one, and survived not only to preserve his vassaldom but also to acquire for himself the State of Jammu and Kashmir, independent of the Punjab State.

THE JAMMU RAJAS' STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

The Punjab Politics of Murder[1]

After Sher Singh came to the throne at Lahore, the Sindhanwalia Chiefs who had supported the cause of Chand Kaur, fearing reprisals had escaped to British India and sought their protection. However, the anti Dogra faction at the Court, (which had the support of the British), alarmed at the rise in the Dogra influence over the Maharaja, was soon able to persuade Sher Singh to allow the Sindhanwalias to return to court for acting as counter weight to the authority wielded by Raja Dhyan Singh. But the Sindhanwalias, Ajit Singh, Lehna Singh and Attar Singh had their own plans to implement. On re-entering court they first created a rift between Maharaja Sher Singh and his Wazir Raja Dhyan Singh and after the two had been estranged — sufficiently, — on — 15 September — 1843 — they murdered both. Sher Singh's son Pratap Singh, even though a little boy of twelve or thirteen, was also murdered to leave no claiment to

1. Based on History of Jammu and Kashmir vol I by Dr. M.L. Kapur

the throne other than the Shindhanwalias themselves.

As nothing stirred in the Capital after these gruesome murders, the Singhhanwalias had reasons to feel satisfied at the way their plan had worked. Unfortunately for them, however, they had not taken into account the Raja Hira Singh factor. The potentialities of the Young Raja had probably lain hidden under the towering personality of his father Raja Dhyan Singh. The death of his father arroused the finnest in him and in a Mark Antony type of a speech before the troops, he so stirred them into action against the murderers of the Majaraja and his father that they, without even caring to properly clothe themselves or take their meals, rushed to storms the Lahore fort where the Sindhanwalias had set themselves up after the murders. While Attar Singh managed to escape, Ajit Singh and Lehna Singh were caught and put to the sword and their severed heads were placed at the feet of Hira Singh. The Army then installed the five year old prince Dalip Singh, son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh by his youngest wife Rani Jindan, (Who had been saved from the Sindhanwalas by the Gorkha Regiment in the fort) on the throne with the Rani acting as the Regent and Raja Hira Singh appointed as the Prime Minister.

Although only 25 years old at that time, Hira Singh displayed wisdom much beyond his years in gaining control over the Chaotic conditions ushered in with the murder of Majaraja Sher Singh and his father and he proved worthy of the trust reposed in him by the Khalsa. To help restore order in the capital and around, Raja Gulab Singh arrived at Lahore as the head of 10,000 Jammu troops. The Dogra troops are reported to have played an important role in bringing about normalcy to the strife torn Punjab by strengthening the hands of the Government of Rani Jindan.

Raja Hira Singh turned out to be a very powerful Wazir but unfortunately he fell under the bad influence of one Pandit Jallah, which caused his ruin. So bewitching was the spell of the Pandit over Hira Singh that the young minister would listen to no advice which suggested his removal from the court; even when it came from his well wishers like his uncle Gulab Singh and the Army Panches who were instrumental in his appointment as a Wazir. On the other hand he preferred to make enemies not only among the Sikhs but also among the Jammu Dogras, including his own family. His uncle Raja Suchet Singh became so annoyed at the arrogant behaviour of his nephew that he started working for his removal from office by fanning the flames of revolt led by Kashmira Singh and Peshora Singh who, as the reputed sons of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, laid claim to the throne. This brought the uncle and the nephew into a headlong clash which ultimately resulted in the former being killed by Hira Singh's troops on 26 March' 1844. Rai Kesri Singh who supported the cause of Suchet Singh was also killed on that day.

Due to his obstinate adherence to the evil genius, Pandit Jalla, Hira Singh soon alienated himself from his uncle Gulab Singh as well as his brothers Jawahar Singh and Moti Singh. Due to the same reason he also lost control over the army. This gave an opportunity to the anti-Jammu faction in the court, headed by Sardar Jawahar Singh who won over the army and had both Hira Singh and Pandit Jallah murdered on 21 December 1844. Alongwith Hira Singh were killed Mian Sohan Singh, son of Raja Gulab Singh, and Mian Labh Singh who tried to defend Hira Singh.

After the death of Hira Singh, the only remaining source of challenge to the authority of the Rani Jindan Jawahar Singh-

Lal Singh clique, that came to power, was Raja Gulab Singh, and the new rulers set about to eliminate that also. As a matter of fact two birds were sought to be killed with one stone. The soldiers had to be pacified with increased pays for the support they had lent to Jawahar Singh but the treasury was empty. Consequently, orders were issued to Gulab Singh to pay arrears of taxes due from him, which were computed to an amount beyond the capacity of the Jammu treasury to pay. He was also asked to hand over to the Durbar estates taxpay belonging to Suchet Singh and Hira Singh as the two had left no heirs behind. Gulab Singh's protests went unheeded and on expiry of the ultimatum a large army was despatched against Jammu in June 1845.

The Invasion of Jammu.

The total army of the Jammu Rajas, now all under Raja Gulab Singh was about 21 Battalions. Two of these belonging to Mian Jawahar Singh, eight to Gulab Singh himself, six to late Raja Hira Singh, two to late Raja Suchet Singh, two to the late Dogra Chief Rai Kesari Singh and one to Mian Labh Singh. In addition, there was a 2500 strong Cavalry and 600 gunners with 50 guns.[2] This army was spread all over the Jammu State and how much of it was used against the Sikhs is not clear. Gulab Singh was expecting this invasion even when Raja Hira Singh was the Lahore Wazir so he must have added to his strength by enrolling irregulars. One source puts strength mobilised by the Raja on the eve of the invasion at 25000 in all.[3] Even then this army could not have been any match numerically to the Sikh army that invaded Jammu. British intelligence

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2. Major G.C.Smyth, The Reigning Family of Lahore pp

3. Dr. M.L. Kapur p 166

reported pertaining to the period indicate that the entire Sikh army (other than that under the Jammu Rajas) was mobilised for the attack on Jammu.[4]

The Durbar troops had first moved against Jammu in January 1845 when they attacked Jasrota. Gulab Singh had then vacated the area without fighting, on the promise from the Durbar that the estate would not be plundered. The Durbar troops, however, failed to keep the promise and not only plundered Jasrota but also carried off a large number of its women. This had a unifying effect among the Dogras, who had begun to pull in different directions due to the infighting among the Rajas themselves. They now determined to fight it out at Jammu when the Durbar troops advanced on it in June 1845.[5]

On the first day, the Sikhs succeeded in pushing the Dogras back from all forward posts, except for one or two that held on. But instead of taking advantage of the situation, the Sikhs decided to withdraw for the night. This gave a new lease of life to the Dogras who re-occupied all the posts during the night. The tough fight that the Dogras had given to the Durbar troops while defending these posts discouraged the latter from making another attempt at capturing these posts. It was now the Dogras's turn for going on to the offensive. On the very second night they attacked the Sikh camp south of Jammu most vigorously; driving all before them and capturing two guns. Indeed they were on the point of complete victory when Sardar Shyam Singh, the Commander of the camp dismounting from his

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4. National Archives New Delhi, Secret proceedings 20-27 June 1845 ser 586

5. Dr. ML Kapur pp 172-73.

elephant, charged at the Dogras in person, and pushed them back. The Sikh column under Ranjoor Singh Majithia which was advancing on Jammu by the hills from the eastern side was also faced with stiff resistance from the Dogras under Wazir Ratnu, and the first action fought between the two had been indecisive.[6]

This war between the Sikhs and the Dogras was a peculiar one. None seemed to be having his heart in it. The Sikhs appear to have been as much concerned about the unnecessary shedding of blood of their Dogra brethren as the Dogras were of their Sikh brothers (for that is what the relationship between the two had been till then) and the Sikhs agreed to the proposal for starting negotiations as eagerly as it was made by the Raja of Jammu. The fighting, however, continued even while the two sides haggled over the terms of surrender. Sardar Ranjoor Singh after the initial set back to his advance, ultimately defeated Wazir Ratnu and opened the eastern route to Jammu. Likewise Sardar Mangal Singh, who had also suffered an initial defeat, was ultimately able to capture the MunaWar fort and thereby open the western approach to Jammu via Akhnoor. After this Jammu lay more or less prostrate before the Lahore army and Raja Gulab Singh, in order to save the town from being sacked, hastened the process of negotiations and surrendered himself to the Khalsa. As a precondition the Sikhs withdrew to a distance of 5 miles from the town.[7]

A meeting was held between the Sikh Sardars and Raja Gulab

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6. National Archives, Secret proceedings 20-27 June 1845 ser No. 586

7. Ibid

Singh at Tulab Tillo on 15th June 1845. The Raja was treated with great respect and due regard by the Sikhs who still looked upon him as their leader. Gulab Singh on his part treated the Sardars and the soldiery as his guests and distributed presents amongst them. At the meeting he explained to the Sardars and the Panchas that the army had been sent against him more out of Jawahar Singh's personal enmity towards him, than his non payment of government dues. He quoted facts and figures to prove that all the other Chiefs owed to the Darbar many times more than himself but no action had been taken against them. He offered to pay to the treasury rupees 35 lakhs which, according to him, was all that he owed to the government. He agreed to accompany the army to Lahore and on the way he so convinced the army about the righteousness of his cause that he was escorted to Lahore less in captivity and more in triumph.[8] So much so that he was requested by the army to take over as the Prime Minister and save Punjab from economic ruin. Once at Lahore the Panchas there refused to produce Gulab Singh in the Darbar as a prisoner as desired by the Rani and Jawahar Singh. They first released him and then introduced him to Maharaja Dalip Singh and his mother at the court as they would have any other nobleman. In the meantime rift had developed between Lal Singh and Jawahar Singh and with a view to win over Gulab Singh on to his side the former prevailed upon the Rani to reduce the Jammu Raja's dues to Rs. 27 lakhs. The Raja was then offered the post of Prime ?inister of Punjab which he tactfully declined and after a few days returned to Jammu.[9]

It was not long, before Jawahar Singh showed his true colours

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8. Ibid

9. Ibid

and within a year of his having taken over as the Wazir he earned the wrath of the Khalsa who condemned him and put him to death in September 1845. Confusion prevailed for two months after Jawahar Singh was executed. Raja Gulab Singh was once again asked by the Khalsa to come to Lahore and take over as Wazir[10] but he did not wish to embroil himself with the Lahore politics and very tactfully declined the offer. The army then had no choice but to nominate Lal Singh to this high office in November. Sardar Tej Singh was confirmed in his appointment of Commander in Chief.

The last two years had indeed been a great struggle for existence for the Dogra Rajas, in which all but Raja Gulab Singh had perished. Although Raja Gulab Singh had been confirmed in his possessions it was now quite evident that the threat to his life and to his Raj would continue unless he freed himself from the Lahore Darbar. It was, therefore, natural for him to eagerly wait for such an opportunity.

By the end of 1846 it was quite evident that in keeping with with the British policy of territorial aggrandisement, the immediate object of their ambition was the conquest of Lahore. This belief of the Sikhs was strengthened by certain acts of Major Broad foot the British agent for Sikh affairs.[11] However not many Chiefs of Punjab appeared to be concerned about the threat to the independence of Punjab. In fact most of the Chiefs were even prepared to go under the British and lean on their support, if only that would help them to retain their possessions.

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10. JD Cunningham, The History of The Sikhs pp 243-44

11. Ibid pp 252-255

The army alone cherished the desires to maintain the independence of Punjab and this they were determined to do even at the cost of their lives. This in itself had made the war between the Sikhs and the British inevitable, but the war may not have taken place as early as it did, had not Lal Singh and Tej Singh precipitated matters by exploiting the sentiments of the Khalsa against the British and goading them on to cross the Sutluj on 11 December 1845. It is believed that the aim of Lal Singh and Tej Singh to start the war was to lead the army, which had become all too powerful and uncontrolable, to its destruction at the hands of the British.[12] Naturally no heed was paid to the advise of the Raja Gulab Singh against the starting of the war.[13]

During the course of the war the Khalsas fought most gallantly but with Lal Singh and Tej Singh deserting them at the most crucial times, probably in accordance with their plans made before hand, the valour of the Khalsa remained undirected most of the times.[14] As the situation began to go against the Sikhs Raja Gulab Singh was once again summoned by the Durbar. He arrived at Lahore on 27 January 1846 to give unity and vigour to the counsels of the Sikhs but by then it was too late and defeat had already overtaken the Lahore Army. Consequently he was made the Prime Minister and asked to negotiate a peace treaty with the British.

Although the British had won the war, what they had gone through at the hands of the Sikhs during the course of the war had been most distasteful to them. They were, therefore, as eager about concluding a peace treaty, as were the Sikhs. To be

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12. Ibid p 257

13. Dr ML Kapur p 219

14. JD Cunningham pp 265-267

able to speak from a ~~somewhat~~ somewhat position of strength Gulab Singh would not allow the British to forget that his army was all in tact and that Delhi lay defence-less and exposed to an out-flanking attack by a force that need not be too large.[15] The British on their part tried to win him over by reminding him of the treatment meted out to him and his family by the Darbar but Gulab Singh pointed out that his loyality was to Maharaja Dalip Singh, the son of his great benefactor, who had had no hand in bringing about the destruction of his family.[16] Raja Gulab Singh thus spurned all offers made to him by the British and secured for the young Maharaja terms as best as were possible for one vanquished.

CREATION OF THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR STATE

The Treaty of Lahore between the British and the Sikhs that followed the negotiations, stipulated, besides other things, payment of war indemnity by the Sikhs. Lal Singh and Rani Jidan tried to utilise the clause for divesting Gulab Singh of his territories. They expressed their inability to pay more than rupees 50 lakhs in cash, out of a total of rupees one and a half crores required to be paid to the British as the war indemnity, and offered to transfer Kashmir and the territory under Gulab Singh in lieu of the balance. It was at this stage that the Raja Gulab Singh made the offer of paying the balance amount, on the condition that Kashmir and Jammu were both transferred to his independent possession. This was readily agreed to by the British

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15. KM Panikkar, The Founding of the Kashmir State pp 93-94

16. Ibid pp 96-97

and to make the payment suit Gulab Singh's pocket the war indemhity was reduced to rupees 75 Lakhs. The amount was rendered still more easy of payment as the British accepted Gulab Singh as the heir to the money which his brother Suchet Singh had left buryied in Ferozepur. The transfer of Punjab territories to the possession of Raja Gulab Singh was given effect through the Treaty of Amritsar concluded between the Raja and the British Government on 16 March 1846. As per this Treaty the British Government transferred and made over for ever, in independent possession, to Maharaja Gulab Singh and his heirs all the hilly and mountainous country with its dependencies situated eastward of the river Indus and westward of the river Ravi, including Jammu, Ladakh, Kashmir, Gilgit, and Hazara ~~and Chamba~~ and excluding Lahul, being part of the teriitory already ceded to the British government by the Lahore State according to the provisions of the Treaty of Lahore dated 9 March 1946. The new Maharja on his part acknowledged the supermacy of the British Government and in token of such supermacy was to present to the British Government annually one horse, twelve prefect shawal goats of approved breed and three pairs of Kashmir shawls.[17] Boundary adjustments with mutual consent were subsequently made during the first few years of the signing of the Treaty. It was thus that Hazara was exchanged for Bhimber and Khari-Kharial territory in 1847.

Though there can be little doubt that the British had reasons for feeling grateful to Gulab Singh for having kept

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17. JD Cunningham pp 377-78

JAMMU AND KASHMIR STATE - 1846

himself away from the war and also for bringing about speedy peace between them and the Sikhs, the transfer of Kashmir to him was not totally motivated by these considerations. One of the main objects of the Government of India after the war was to weaken the Sikhs by dismembering their empire and reducing their resources. The creation of the Jammu and Kashmir State was part of this British game. The British did not want to hold Kashmir themselves as the distance from the Sutluj to Kashmir was 300 miles of very difficult and mountainous country quite impracticable for six months, and to keep a British force at that distance, without any possibility of support, was not a feasible proposition for them.[18] Kashmir was in fact palmed off to Gulab Singh as he was the man "eminently qualified by character and surrounding territorial possessions for the position of a ruler there".[19] By the formation of the Jammu and Kashmir State they had also created a friendly buffer state between themselves, China and Nepal on the one hand, and Afghanistan on the other. But this is how they felt at that time. Subsequently when they were firmly established in India and the holding of Kashmir no longer appeared as difficult, they cursed themselves for what they had done.[20]

Occupation of Kashmir.[21]

Lal Singh who had been confirmed as the Wazir (with the title of a Raja bestowed on him) of what remained of the Sikh Kingdom after the war, continued to play foul with his avowed

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18. KM Panikkar, pp 106-108

19. Ibid p 107
20. Ibid pp 108-109
21. Based on information contained in National Archives New Delhi Foreign Secret files No: 1110-12, 1142-48, 1143-47, 1210-11, 951-1119 all dated 26 December 1846.

enemy Maharaja Gulab Singh and secretly sent instructions to Sheikh Imam-ud-Din (son of Sheikh Mohi Ud Din) the Governor of Kashmir to resit the Dogra take over of the province. Consequently the Sheikh commenced mobilising his forces for a show-down with Gulab Singh. A large number of Afghans volunteered to join his forces in the fond hope of ultimately regaining Kashmir for themselves.

Unsuspectingly Maharaja Gulab Singh sent Wazir Lakhpat Rai to take over Kashmir with just 200 men. The force was soon strengthened by another 400 men but by then Imam-ud-Din had mobilised twelve to eighteen thousand troops with about 24 field guns. The Sheikh's malafides became apparent when after handing over the Hari Parbat fort to Wazir Lakhpat he refused to vacate the Shergarhi fort. He created a dispute by laying fictitious claims to a large sum of money which he alleged that Gulab Singh owed to him. Consequently Gulab Singh began to build up his forces and by August 1846 about 7000 Dogras had been inducted into Kashmir, Wazir Hatnu was sent up to to take over as the overall Commander of the Dogra forces. These forces were stationed in and around the Hari Parbat fort. The Hari Parbat fort no doubt held a commanding position but had only four guns and was too ill planned and badly constructed by the Afghans during their rule, to afford protection to the troops within, to any great measure. It had been probably for this reason that Imam-ud-Din had handed over the fort without fuss. Comparing the two forces Captain Broome, the British representative stationed in Kashmir to supervise the handing/ taking over, noted that the Sheikh's army consisted mainly of ill disciplined ruffians who engaged themselves in plundering the population while the Maharaja's troops were "most quite

and orderly". All the same the Governor had the advantage of overwhelming numbers which he planned to exploit in his attempt to become an independent ruler of Kashmir.

While the negotiations through Captain Broome were going on Sheikh Imam-ud-Din made sure that he gave no indications of his intentions of fighting it out with the Dogras, in order to make them thoroughly complacent. Even while he concentrated his forces at Shergarhi for the final attack, he gave an impression that he was collecting his troops to move them out to Lahore. Then when all was set, he suddenly pounced on the unsuspecting Dogras on 30 August and surrounded them from all sides. Colonel Mathura Dass rallied his troops and breaking through the enemy ring reached the safety of the Hari Parbat fort after killing about 50 of the enemy. Other Dogra officers also made similar rallies in a bid to break through the enemy cordon and join up with Wazir Ratnu's force inside the fort. In the process while some 4000 men were able to concentrate inside the fort, Wazir Lakhpat Rai the hero of many a battle fought by the Dogras in the earlier days, was killed alongwith one hundred of his brave soldiers. Of the other officers Rae Dehle (name not clear), Nathu Shah, Commandant Husmat Ali and Mirza Fateh Ali Khan were taken prisoners. Some 500 men (mostly Rohilas) of the Jammu army deserted to the enemy and 2500 or so got badly dispersed. All these men unable to join the force in the Hari Parbat fort made their way to Jammu and reported to the army headquarters there in tatters and minus their weapons.

Sheikh Imam-ud-Din now laid seige to the fort and demanded the surrender of the garrison. The Dogras naturally refused to oblige, but as days passed by, their anxiety grew and Wazir Ratunu not sure of what steps were being taken by the

authorities for his relief, addressed a latter to his Maharaja asking for reinforcements before the advent of winter. Maharaja Gulab Singh on the other hand was in a very difficult position. The Hazares were still in arms against the Dogras and some 7000 troops under Diwan Hari Chand were engaged in suppressing these tribals. Rebellion had also broken out in Rajouri area where Faquir-Ullah with his 2000 strong rebel army had overcome the 100 strong Dogra garrison and expelled the Governor, to become the ruler himself. This had forced the Maharaja to despatch a sizeable force under Diwan Bakim Rai to quell the rebellion there. There was also a limit to the new levies that could be raised. Besides the financial restreints Jammu's manpower resources had reached their tethers end. Continuous wars had greatly checked the growth of population and depleted the numbers of the young and the able bodied. As a matter of fact the 3000 strong levies that he he now sought to raise attractted only the old and the physically weak; which was all that was left at Jammu.

To meet the situation, therefore, the Maharaja was compelled to seek British help. Consequently on 22nd September JaWala Sahai the Prime Minister of the New State was desppatched to Colonel LaWrance, the agent to the Governor General, with the request for help. It is interesting to note that while assuring the Maharaja of British help Colonel LaWarance in his letter to him wondered how the "Lokman of India", as he chose to call Gulab Singh, had himself been outwitted by Sheikh Imam-ud-Din.[22] Little had he perhaps realised that the

22. Ibid file 1110-12, 26 December 1846 pp 1-9

* ~~One seer wighed 930 grams while the chatak weighed about 52 grams.~~

"Lokman" was not going to be outwitted by the British who, it was known, had begun to have second thoughts over the deal which gifted away such a strategic area to Gulab Singh and were now keen to atleast extend their influence over Kashmir at the first opportunity. So as not to allow the British to avail of this opprtunity, that had now presented iteself, the Maharaja limited his request for military aid to the extent of employing their troops only to relieve his troops from their operational tasks in and around Jammu, so that they may be utilised for the expedition to Kashmir. To augment his forces which were to march on Kashmir, the Maharaja ~~the Maharaja also~~ sought to use the British good offices in persuading the Lahore Durbar to detail its troops in support of the Dogra expeditionary force. In addition he made a request for 2000 muskets from the British sources, and as many as possible from the Punjab Government, for arming his newely raised levies.

The British, although disappointed at not having been allowed a hand in the Kashmir pie, accepted the Maharaja's request in full. Of course, it was not totally for nothing that they agreed go help. They took the opportunity for starting interference in the State's internal affairs by asking the Maharaja to settle his differences amicably with the disgruntled muslim Rajas of Nowshera, Rajouri and Bhimber; which they made more or less a pre-condition for sending troops to these areas. Colonel LaWrance also availed of this opportunity for gaining insight into the Maharaja's army of which little seems to have been known to the British then. It is well, from our point of view, that he did so. For JaWala Sahai's answers to the questions that were put to him is perhaps all that is recorded of the State Force during that period.

The Prime Minister divulged to Lawrence that the total

strength of the State force stood at about 20,000 men. Of these 4000 were besieged in the Hari Parbat fort, 6000 were deployed in Chambal, Marrota and Jammu and 7000 deployed against the Hazaras. In addition the State had 300 gunners. To all these could be added the 2500 fugitives from Kashmir provided they were supplied with arms. As regards pay, formerly the Maharaja paid his men rupees two per month and free food, but now a regular rate of pay had been fixed at rupees five a month for the hillman (Dogra) and rupees six for the plainsman from outside the State. The "foreigners" had never been in arrears, but some hillmen did have their pays running in arrears. These arrears were being wiped out by paying the men in instalments of Rs. 10/- or Rs. 20/- at a time. Touching on the troops rations Jawala Sahai disclosed that the hillman received Rs. 2ø- in cash and Rs. 2/- in food. The retions received by the troops in lieu of Rs. 2/- were, a) one seer* atta; b) two chatak* dal; c) four Rice weight of ghee; and d) one pice weight of salt per day. All the hillmen were provided with uniform by the State while the "foreigners" brought their uniforms with them. There was no fixed class composition for units; each unit containing all casts and tribes.[23]

Being hard-pressed for manpower within the State the Maharaja sought the permission of the British for enrolling in his army, Sikhs who had been disbanded in terms of the Treaty of Lahore, and were now keen on serving under Gulab Singh. This request appears to have been turned down. He was, however,

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* One seer wighed 930 grams while the chatak weighed about 58 grams.

23. National Archives New Delhi Foreign Secret file No. 1110-12 of 26 December 1846 p 6

permitted to recruit from other parts of India and even here he was to make sure that no ex-soldier of the Lahore army was enrolled. To make up his strength, the fugitives from Kashmir were given Rs. 4/- each to re-equip themselves and as a further incentive their arrears of pay were cleared. As the State was terribly short of weapons, these men were armed with match-locks and some even with bows and arrows.[24]

The British Indian troops were ordered to move into the State around 24 September 1846 and were deployed as under:-[25]

a) Jammu area - Three regiments Native Infantry, one regiment cavalry (irregular) and troops Horse Artillery.

b) Samba area- Two regiments Native Infantry, one regiment cavalry and four light field guns.

c) Jasrota area- one regiment Native Infantry, one squadron cavalry and two light field guns.

By 20th October the Sikh contingent (mostly Dogras) under sardars Tej Singh and Sher Singh had also arrived in Rajouri and joined hands with the Dogra column under Diwan Nihal Chand. Maharaja Gulab Singh accompanied the Dogra column as its Supreme Commander. The two columns operated in complete amity and crossed over into Kashmir via the Pir Panjal and Budal passes. No sooner had the columns entered Kashmir than Sheikh Imam-ud-Did hastened to surrender. He excused himself for his defiance by producing written instructions from the Lahore Wazir asking him to resist takeover of Kashmir by Gulab Singh.[26] The Dogra garrison in the

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24. Ibid file 1142-48 of 26 Dec 1846
25. Ibid proceedings No 951-1119 of 26 Dec 1846.
26. A Public inquiry was instituted into the facts adduced by Sheikh Imam-ud-Din and it was fully established that Raja Lal Singh did secretly instigate the Sheikh to oppose the occupation by Maharaja Gulab Singh of the province of Kashmir. Consequently Raja Lal Singh was deposed from Premiership of Punjab and exiled to British India (J D Cunningham p 379).

Hari Parbat fort was relived and after sometime the expeditionary force returned to Ja-mmu.

RE-ORGANISATTION OF THE ARMY

By the end of 1846 the founding of the Jammu and Kashmir State was complete and Maharaja Gulab Singh could now devote time to the re-organisation and training of the State forces on European lines. He requested the British for loaning some offficers and men from their army for this purpose. Captain Brooms of the artillery and Lieut J Nicholson of the 27th Regiment of the Native Infantry were consequently nominated to drill and discipline the Maharaja's army. They had under them three Indian other ranks from the artillery and five from the Infantry to act as the lower grade instructors. The gunner instructors came from ~~the troopers of~~ the 4/3 Horse Artillery (4th Troop of the 3rd Brigade) at Ludhiana. The infantry instructors were drawn from the 3rd and the 27th Native Infantry Regiments.[27]

The organisation of the army was based on several different systems prevalent in those days which were grafted not too skilfully, one over the other and which existed separately side by side instead of forming one harmonious whole.[28] In

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27. National Archives New Delhi Foreign Secret file No 479-81 of 26 Dec 1846.

28. Orginsation of the State army which is dealt with in the next few paragraphs is based on the notes on the Kashmir army by Major Biddulph and Mr Henvey as reproduced in the Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh compiled under the direction of the Quarter Master General in India in the Intelligence Branch in 1890, reprinted in 1974 pp 139-158. Although the two notes were written in Jan 1880 and Dec 1882 respectively, the description, (except for the changes that took place in 1877), relates to army as it developed during Maharaja Gulab Singh's time and early part of Maharaja Ranbir Singh's reign. The authors themselves do not vouch for the accuracy of the figures.

addition to the usual divisions of the artillery, infantry and cavalry there were distinctions of the 'Khula fauj' and the 'Jangi fauj'. The 'Khula fauj' which mostly consisted of the infantry was organised on the lines of the Kashmir army under the Afghan rule before the Sikh conquest. It was composed predominently of Pathans with a small proportion of Sikhs, Dogras and Purbiahs. The 'Khula fauj' was organised into 'Bradris' each consisting of one Jamadar, one Havaldar, one 'Nishanchi'* and 22 sepoys. Four such 'Bradris' constituted a Dasta which was commanded by a 'Destadar'. Three 'Dastas' formed the command of a 'Sardar'. The men of the 'Khula fauj' were required to bring their own arms but for the sake of uniformity the State started providing arms to these men on payment. Each man was armed with a match-lock gun and a sword. They held many small outposts on the frontier and were much used for escort work and other odd jobs. Their uniform was of dark blue colour with scarlet turbans, breast 'purdah' and 'kamarbandh'. Pathans from Swat and Bumer who had had to leave their homes on account of blood feuds, men who had been discharged from British regiments for misconduct and miltary waifs and strays in Northern India often found a home in the State's 'Khula fauj'. Besides these there were Kashmiri Pathans who were a fine soldiery race. They were, however, wanting in discipline. The Maharaja started a process of gradually replacing the unruly elements by the more reliable Dogras and Sikhs. As a first step most of the appointments of Sardars in the 'Khula fauj' were filled up with Sikhs and Rajputs.

The cavalry was organised as a part of the 'Khula fauj' in squadrons of about 120 all ranks each, called 'Dgras'. The

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* ~~Name of place not clear.~~ Standard bearer

horses were the property of the men who were responsible for feeding them. However, in order to ensure that the men had the right type of horses and that the horse was adequately fed a system was evolved whereby the State provided the horse to the 'Sawar' and also arranged for its feed, while the 'Sawar' was charged the cost of both. The 'Sawar' was given enough pay to be able to earn more than an infantry-man even after paying for the maintenance of his horse. The State had one squadron of cuirassiers, armed with lances, as its heavy cavalry. There was also a mounted body of Mian Rajputs called the 'Ghorcheras'. They were not drilled nor did they wear uniform. They received no pay but held jagirs in lieu of service. Many of them were related to the Maharaja. Cavalary units that figure in the Army list of 1858 are as under :-

Name of unit	Strength when known
Ghorcharas under Commendan* Basant Singh	-
Dera Mian Zorawar Singh Commendan	127
Dera Mian Khoja Commedan	187
Dera Mian Dhyan Singh Commedan	142
Dera Mian Ramkolia	200
Dera (?) Khan Risaldar	-
Dera Mian Attar Singh	81
Dera Mian Moti Singh	143
Dera Lala Shiv (?) Ram	44
Dera Devi Singh Balaoria	33
Dera Mohammad Khan Risaldar	149
Dera Mohammad Rasool Khan	131
Dera Fateh Ali Khan	104
Dera Mian (?) Singh Ji	76
Mera Mian (?) - Ji	46
Dera Jawahar Singh	286

* Dogri version of Commandant. Also spelt Kamedan

Certain posts on the frontier were held by special bodies of men who were engaged for this purpose only. A number of outposts on the frontier between Astore and Gilgit were held by the Kashmiri Pathans mostly from Machipura where they held jagirs on the condition of furnishing guards to the posts, for which they received no other pay. They were bound to maintain three reliefs of 160 men each and though undrilled they were armed like the 'Khula fauj'.

There also existed a special body of troops called 'Killawalas' (fortsmen) who manned the various forts in the State. It was composed of men who were too old for field service but fit enough for static duties. These troops received less pay than the others.

The Jangi Faui :

The 'Jangi fauj' under Maharaja Gulab Singh was of the pattern set by General Venture under Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The infantry under the 'Jangi fauj' consisted of as many as 26 battalions but not all were upto the strength of 430 men as existing in the Sikh army. The Dogra battalions during the early years varied in strength from 200 all ranks to in certain cases, 585 all ranks. Evidently some units which were termed as battalions were in fact independent companies. The battalions were not numbered but were named; each name carrying the prefix 'Fateh' (taken from the Sikhs). Names of the following battalions appear in the State Army List of 1858.[28(B)]

Name of Regiment	Commandant were known	Strength were known
1. Fateh Lachman	Kumedan Inder Singh	409
2. Fateh Brija	-	-
3. Fateh Shivji	Kumedan Balbhadar	-
4. Fateh Govind	-	-
5. Fateh Amrit	Kumedan Kishan Singh	323

28(B) Jammu Archives Mil Block 'A' file 191 of S 1915 (1852 AD) Doc in hand written Persian, hence accuracy in translation is not vouched for

6.	Fateh Padam Nabh	Kumedan Kishan Singh	-
7.	Fateh Ram Gola	-	-
8.	Fateh Gorakh	-	-
9.	Fateh Lahar Mar	-	-
10.	Fateh Goverdhan	Kumedan Tej Singh	524
11.	Fateh Ram	Kumedan Bahadur	320
12.	Fateh Ranbir	Kumedan Makhana	554
13.	Fateh Narain	-	190
14.	Fateh Shivnabh	-	376
15.	Fateh Olakh	-	194
16.	Fateh Hanuman	Kumedan Balwant Nath	431
17.	Fateh Balbadhar	-	-
18.	Fateh Narsingh	-	-
19.	Feteh Tej	-	862
20.	Fateh Nur	-	-
21.	Fateh Khair	Kumedan Sunder Singh	-
22.	Fateh Ruder	-	-
23.	Fateh Devi	Kumedan Mohar Singh	317
24.	Feteh Raghunath	-	-

The prefix 'Fateh' seems to have been dropped after a few years from all the battalions except the Shivji battalion which retains it to this day. Initially there was no set class composition for the different battalions. Attempt was now made to have, as far as possible, only one caste in one battalion.

Some men for these battalions were provided by the States' Jagirdars as stipulated in the 'sanads'under which the grant of the Jagirs were made. As the number of Jagirdars increased, so did the number of troops provided by them; the Jagirdari troops being ultimately formed into separate battalions. It is not known whether these battalions were raised as Jagirdar battalions or subsequently converted, but Ruder and Shivnabh Battalions (later merged into one) are known to have been composed of Jagirdar troops, known as 'Bargirs', even as late as the beginning of the 20th Century. The Lachman Battalion is also known to have been a Jagirdar battalion right upto the time of its disbandment in 1828 or so. On failure of the Jagirdar to provide the required number of men, his Jagir could be resumed by the State. The 'Bargirs' were paid directly by the Jagirdar and not by the State.

The artillery also formed part of the 'Jangi fauj'. It was organised into field and mountain batteries; the former equipped with 6 x 10 pounders or 6 x 4 pounders guns and the latter into 4 x 3 pounder guns; all smooth bore and of the old pattern. Each of the field guns was drawn by six horses. The mountain gun known as the 'Dastri Tope' was carried on man pack basis; 36 men being allowed for the carriage of each gun. There were also the batteries of smaller type of guns known as 'Sher Bacha'. The exact number of the 'Tope Khannas' (as the batteries were called) under Gulab Singh is not known. However, the State Army List of 1858 indicates that the state army as at this stage had about eight batteries, four of them being field/mountain and four of 'Sher Bachas'. Rajputs and Punjabi Musalmans were mainly enrolled as gunners. Special 'Kahars' were subsequently employed for the carriage of man pack mountain guns but the 'Sher Bachas' continued to be carried by the gunners themselves right upto the time they remained in use.

In addition to this army Maharaja Gulab Singh's feudatory, the Raja of Poonch had an infantry force of about 1000 men comprising mostly of Dogras and Chibalis.

Armament:

The armament was of the most hetrogeneous type and there were not less than six or seven kinds of fire arms employed. The main type in use was the 'Bharmar' manufactured in the arms factories at Jammu, Srinagar and Lainagam (a place on the road to Gulmarg). The arms factory at Jammu was the principal one in the State. The workmanship was not too good but muzzle loading rifles were turned out at the rate of about six a month. Small mountain guns were also manufactured here. Shells though not of too good a quality were manufactured in fairly large quantities.

Match-locks, blunderbusses, bayonets, swords etc were freely made. The arms factory at Srinagar also produced rifles and carbines. At Lainagam the arms factory was a small one but could produce five rifles a month. Walnut wood was used for making the stocks of rifles.

The iron found in the country was not of a good quality and Bajaur iron was imported via Muzafarabad for the manufacture of service gun barrels; other parts being made from local iron. Some steel for swords, knives etc was imported from Iran and Syria. In the guns, only the inner portion of the barrel was made of the imported steel. The bayonets were also made of the local iron, but tipped with imported steel. There was also a gun powder factory at Jammu.

REVOLT IN GILGIT [29]

Even as the State Forces were being reorganised and revamped they were called upon to meet the threat to Gilgit posed by Gauhar Rehaman. Gilgit had been annexed to Kashmir by Sheikh Mohi-ud-Din who was the Sikh Governor of Kashmir during Maharaja Sher Singh's time and it had remained under Kashmir ever since. Consequent upon the transfer of Kashmir to Maharaja Gulab Singh Gilgit also got transferred to him automatically in 1846. Nuthe Shah who was the Governor of Gilgit under the Sikhs at that time retained his appointment after he had transferred his services to the Jammu and Kashmir State, on Gilgit forming

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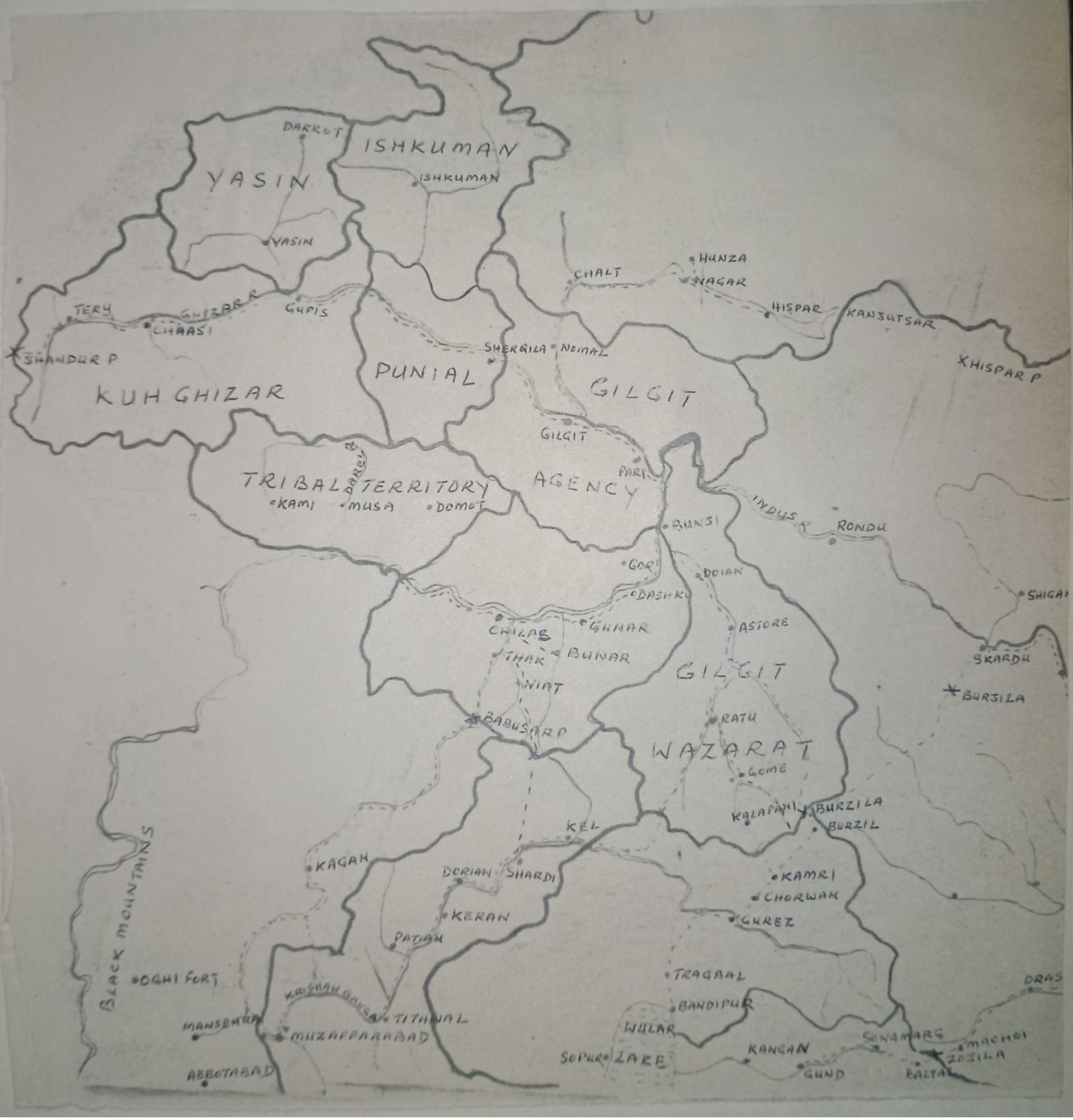
29. Based on information contained in National Archieves Foreign Secret file Nos 34-60 B dated July 1877 and 61-62 dated 23 July 1849, Kashmir and Ladakh Gazetteer pp 137-138 and J&K Adm Report for the year S 1993-94 (1936 AD)

GILGIT AND ADJOINING TRIBAL TERRITORY



part of the new state. Taking advantage of the somewhat unstable conditions which were caused by the change in the rulers, Gauhar Rehman who at this time governed Punial and Yasin, the boundaries of which touched those of the Jammu and Kashmir State at Gilgit, invaded this frontier area with the help of the chiefs of Hunza and Nagar people and occupied it. In August 1848 a State force column, some 2000 strong, was despatched to Gilgit against Gauhar Rehman. By November the same year the invader had been thrown out and Gilgit was again in the Dogra hands. Gauhar Rehman, however, struck again in 1849. Nuthe Shah the Dogra Governor and Raja Karim Khan went out against him but both were killed in the fighting that ensured. After this the people of Gilgit also revolted and surrounded the fort of Gilgit which was held by Nathe Shah's brother with a handful of Dogras. After resisting the rebels for sometime the garrison was finally forced to surrender and the Dogras lost Gilgit for the second time. In the meantime Sikh insurrection had broken out in Punjab and Maharaja Gulab Singh, in order to dispel British doubts about his involvement in the insurgency (of which he was being strongly suspected)was obliged to carry out operations for flushing out Sikh insurgents who had taken refuge in his territory. This prevented Gulab Singh from undertaking a large scale operation for the restoration of his authority in Gilgit. Something however had to be done, so he mustered a small force and despatched it to Gilgit. This force recaptured all but four forts which were strongly defended by the invaders. Not being strong enough to take the remaining forts the Dogras adopted a defensive posture while waiting for reinforcements from Jammu.

SIKH INSURGENCY IN PUNJAB

As the Dogra Force waited at Gilgit thus, Maharaja Gulab Singh got busy helping the British against the Punjab insurgents. Besides offers of monetary aid and aid in the form of supply of rations, a force under the command of Dewan Hari Chand was detailed to cooperate with Major (later ~~Lt. Col~~ Lieut Colonel) F Mackeson's force. Major Mackeson, who was also the agent to the Governor General, in turn, ordered ~~Lt~~ Lieutenant D G Robinson(Royal Engineers) on 27 February 1849 to join the Dogra force, so detailed, and with it press the Sikh rebels in their retreat. The State troops earmarked for the purpose were at that time encamped at Mangala. They were now moved to Chaomukh where Robinson joined them. From here Robinson advanced to Pulloenah fort with two regiments and some cavalary of the State force. The fort dominated the rebel encampment at the head of the Bukrala pass. After 8 guns had been brought to Pulloenah from Jammu on elephants and mounted on the fort, ready to fire, Dewan Hari Chand approached the rebels in their camp (after all they had been his brothers-in-arms not too long back) and asked them to surrender so as to avoid bloodshed. All the 900 rebels then surrendered their arms and they were allowed to pass through the Dogra camp safely. On 3rd March Hari Chand sent detatchments to Sringini and Balimah forts. The Sikh irregulars occuping the forts once again surrendered their arms on being allowed a safe passage out. The next day the Dogra force marched to Kullar and from there pushed out the cavalry to Buta which was the jagir of Sardar Chattar Singh, the rebel leader. Here again there was no fighting but some casulties occured when the troops tried to enter Chattar Singh's house which had been mined. From here the British troops marched on to Manikialab* while the State cavalry was withdrawn.

30. Based on information contained in National Archieves Foreign Secret file no 129-61 of 27 Dec 1850

* Name of place not clear.

By the 15th of March the Sikh rebels had laid down their arms before Major Mackeson and the State troops were given leave to return. The work of the State force was greatly commended by the British. A special tribute was paid to them by Lieut Robinson when he noted in his diary that "plundering all round our camp is disgraceful and certainly the Jammu force in this respect shows a much better example".

While Diwan Hari Chand was cooperating with Major Mackeson's force, Diwan ~~Hari~~ Nihal Chand with a Dogra force, which included ~~Col~~ Colonel Steinback's regiments, was sent out to cooperate with the forces of Sir Fredric Currie in Gujrat (Punjab). The work of this force was also greatly commended by the British.

GILGIT RECAPTURED[31]

Although the conduct of the army under Hari Chand and Nihal Chand and Maharaja's own conduct in providing monetary as well as material help to the British during their counter insurgency operations in Punjab did much to water down ~~the~~ British suspicions regarding the Maharaja's involvement on the side of the Sikh insurgents, they never exonerated him of the charge completely. It is only that Gulab Singh had been given the benefit of doubt. This is evident from the Governor General's noting on the concerned file on 9th November 1850 where he goes on to say that "we should at the sametime be carefull not to relax in any degree the vigilance with which we watch over the conduct of our new subjects in the districts adjoining His Highness' territories or abandon the proper precautions of keeping ourselves

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31. See note 29 above

well informed as to all the proceedings of a prince so astute and powerful as he has shown himself to be."[32] With this suspicion working at the back of their minds it was natural that they should have got alarmed when Maharaja Gulab Singh began preparations for an expedition to Gilgit. As a matter of fact Gulab Singh felt obliged to write a letter to John Lawrence to allay his fears at the raising of additional troops for the impending operation in Gilgit. In it he wrote that " I have no intention of letting my force overstep my proper boundary. But when any one stretches out his hand within that boundary and creates disturbance, if I delay to put that man down atonce, it must prove injurious to my Government."[33] Thereafter the preparation went on, unhindered by the British.

After all the preparations had been completed a force, 2000 strong, under Bakshi Hari Singh marched off to Gilgit sometime in August 1849. However, even as the force was still on its way to Gilgit, news was received that the Gilgit garrison had on its own recapatured all the remaining forts and Gilgit was once again in the Dogra hands.[34]

CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHILAS

Trouble arose on the Gilgit Frontier once again in September 1850 when Chilasias made a raid into Astore territory. The invaders destroyed five villages, murdering and wounding 20 to 30 persons, while they carried away into slavery not less than one thousand inhabitants. The Maharaja applied to the Governor General for permission to attack Chilas and punish the tribals for their atrocities and conduct. The permission was granted in October that year and as it was late in the season, action against Chilas was

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32. National Archives, Foreign Secret No 129-61 of 27 Dec 1850

33. Ibid file no 61 & 62 of 28 July 1849

34. Ibid

now planned for the next year.[35]

The initial plan envisaged an advance via Khagan in British territory. The Maharaja's aim of passing through Khagan was to over awe the Chilasias before the attack by impressing upon them the British involvement in the operation. This plan also suited the British as they themselves were contemplating action against Sitana, one of the three Jagirdars of Khagan, who had enrolled some 'Hindostanis' and was planning to revolt against the British. The British had estimated that three regiments would be required to deal with the situation there. They were, therefore, not averse to cooperating with the Maharaja even though they had seen through his game. Maharaja Gulab Singh, however, changed his plan as soon as he had received the British permission to use their territory. The mere fact that the British were prepared to allow him the use of their territory against Chilas was enough to create the desired impression on the Chilasis and there was now, he felt, no point in passing through British territory and serving their interests.[36]

The Maharaja decided to take the direct route through Kashmir. Accordingly store houses were built at every stage from Srinagar to some 15 Kos* on own side of the Chilas border. The road was cleared and repaired and arrangements were made to store supplies at each of the stages. The Chilas force itself was organised into two brigades- the main brigade and the support brigade. The main brigade consisting of 5000 men, four guns,

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35. Ibid Foreign Pol 105 of 6 Jun 1851

36. Ibid

* One Kos is roughly equal to 2 Km

7 howitzers and some Sher Bachas was concentrated at Sopore while the support brigade comprising 3000 men was cantoned at Sardee. Raja Jawahir Singh of Poonch was given the task of moving to Muzaffarabad with his troops and keeping a watch over the Kuka-Bamba Chiefs who, it was feared, might take advantage of States pre-occupation in the Chilas campaign and create trouble in that area.[37]

The overall command of the force was bestowed upon Diwan Hari Chand, despite protests from Colonel Steinback whose two regiments had been included in the Chilas expeditionary force. It appears that Colonel Steinback had been inducted into the State Forces by the British for intelligence purposes and they would have very much liked him to continue in service under all circumstances. It was, however, too much for Colonel Steinback to be put under the command of an Indian, and that too a civilian, as Steinback considered Hari Chand to be. Consequently he put in his resignation from the Maharaja's services and this was accepted by the Maharaja without any hesitation. Interestingly Colonel Steinback in his letter of resignation prophesied doom of the force under the "civilian".[38] Other officers whose regiments were included in the force under Diwan Hari Chand were Wazir Zorawar, Colonel Bije Singh, Colonel Jawahar, Lochan Singh, Diwan Thakur Dass and Colonel Devi Singh.[39]

As soon as Diwan Hari Chand arrived at Chilas he ordered the raising of breast work around the fort which was strongly held by the enemy. While this work was going on the Chilasias

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37. Ibid Foreign Secret No 10-11 of 26 Sep 1851

38. Ibid Foreign Pol No 30 of 29 Aug 1851

39. Diwan Kirpa Ram Gulabnama translation Dr SS Charak pp 386-388

rallied from the fort to launch a large scale night attack on the Dogras. The brunt of the attack was directed on Colonel Devi Singh's regiment which got completely routed and the colonel managed to save his life with great difficulty. The attack was finally repulsed and by morning the Dogras were back to their breast work. The enemy within the fort, however, continued to show aggressive spirit and the besiegers were subjected to musket fire day and night. As the enemy showed no signs of surrender Diwan Hari Chand decided to take the fort by assault but unfortunately the ladders carried by the force proved to be short of length and failed to reach the top of the walls of the fort. Besides, the Dogras were faced with such heavy showers of musket balls and stones from the top of the ramparts as they tried to climb up, that they were thrown back with great loss. Some 1500 Dogras were killed or wounded during this unsuccessful assault. Among the Officers Kumedan Gijra Naramia was killed fighting bravely and ~~Col~~ Colonel Bije Singh was wounded seriously. The Dogras, however, remained undaunted and stuck tenaciously to their breastwork. As their rations began to run out they are reported to have started eating leaves of trees to supplement them.[40]

Diwan Hari Chand the hero of many battles had by now realised that the defenders had food stocks that could outlast his own and it was therefore impossible to starve the enemy out of the fort. The vulnerability of the enemy lay only in their water supply, the only source of which was a well within the fort (probably on theedge of it). He appreciated that if this water source could some how be exhausted the surrender of the fort garrison would be quickened. This gave him an idea of digging out a tunnel right upto the bottom of the well and making the water to run out of it. The idea worked and as soon as the tunnel

40. Ibid

touched the bottom of the well the water gushed out through it. The enemy continued to resist for three days even after he had been deprived of his water source. Thereafter he threw opened the gates in an attempt to break out. The fugitives were pursued and quite a number was put to the sowrd, while many others were captured.[41]

When the news of the initial reverse had reached the Maharaja he had been greatly distressed and even though he was ill he wanted to proceed to the front to take charge of the situation. He had, however, been dissuaded by the courtiers from taking this action, and after relenting he had ordered his son Mian Ranbir Singh to move to Sopore and take charge of the campaign. He had also ordered despatch of reinforcements to Chilas under Diwan Nihal Chand and Raja Kak. However, the news of Hari Chand's victory in Chilas was received before the reinforcements could even start from Jammu. Diwan Hari Chand returned to Jammu triumphantly; bringing alongwith him the Chiefs of Chilas. The Chiefs paid tribute to the Maharaja and were permitted to return only after they surrendered their sons and nobles to the State government for being kept as hostages.[41]

GILGIT LOST AGAIN

Hardly had the Chilas affair been settled when in 1852 Gauhar Rahman suddenly entered Gilgit with a large force and surrounded the Gilgit fort and the Mandar fort a couple of miles off. Hearing of this Bhoop Singh Badwal who was in command of the reserve at Bawanji (Bunji) and Astore advanced to the relief of these forts with 1200 men. He crossed the Nila Dhar and reached the bank of the Gilgit river where he found the road blocked by the enemy. The Dards had in the meantime managed to

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41. Ibid

get to the rear of Bhoop Singh and with the road block in the front and enemy in the rear, the Dogras were caught in a trap. The Dogras were however too strong to be attacked so the Dards combined treachery with strategy in dealing with them. They promised supply of provisions and a safe passage to Bhoop Singh if he agreed to retire but even after he had agreed to their terms no supply of rations was made and the Dogras were kept without food for seven days. When they had been sufficiently weakened through starvations thus, they were attacked from all sides. The Hunza people began to fire on them from the left bank of the Gilgit river while ~~the~~ Gauhars's men fired down on them from the dominating heights which they were occupying to the south. The Dogras were soon overwhelmed and nearly one thousand including Bhoop Singh were killed in this trap. The remaining were taken prisoners and sold in salavery.[42]

In the meantime an adjutant with two to three hundred men sallied from the Gilgit fort in the aid of Manoar fort (also known as Naupura) being held by a Gorkha regiment of the State Force under Kumedan Devi Din but before succour could reach Manoar the water supply of the fort was cut by the ehemy and the garrison, after fighting for a full one day was forced to surrender due to the lack of drinking water. 300 Gorkhas were killed in this action and many were made prisoners to be sold as slaves. The enemy then concentrated against the Gilgit fort. Here the Thanadar, Santokh Singh was treacherously induced to come out of the fort and then killed alongwith most of his garrison. Those that escaped killing were sold as slaves. The whole of Gilgit thus fell into the hands

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42. Fredric Drew Jammu and Kashmir Territories pp 441-42

of Gauhar Rehman who was to become its virtual ruler for some years to come.

The Gorkhas serving in the State Force were at that time permitted to take their familes wherever they were posted. Consequently a large number of Gorkhas soldiers in the two forts had their families with them at the time of the invasion. In order to save them from disgrace all the women folk appear to have been killed by their own men before the forts were surrundered to the Dards. Only one woman escaped who, after an arduous journey which involved swimming across the Indus reached Bunji to tell the story of the Dogra debacle. From here she was sent to Jammu where she was well reWarded by the Maharaja in the form of a pension and some grants.[43]

The Dogras appear to have made an attempt to recapture Gilgit in 1855 but the force returned, (for some unknown reasons), after successfully running through parts of Gilgit; leaving Gauhar Rehman in the control of the Gilgit once again. Another attempt was made in 1856 which was more successful and Gilgit was recaptured by the Dogras. In 1857, however, Gauhar Rehman taking advantage of the Maharajas preoccupation with the Indian Mutiny again attacked Gilgit and drove out the Dogras from there; perhaps for the fourth time.[44] It was then not before 1860 that the Dogras could regain Gilgit, as we shall subsequently see.

ABDICATION OF MAHARAJA GULAB SINGH

Maharaja Gulab Singh had been suffering from dropsy for a long time but even otherwise he was now a tired man having performed so much in so short a time. Besides, he was perhaps worried about the future of his dynasty and desired to see his

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43. Ibid
44. National Archieves, Foreign Secret 34-60 B of July 1877

son on the 'Gaddi' during his own life time. Consequently in an act, perhaps, unprecedented in history he abdicated voluntarily in favour of his only surviving son, Ranbir Singh, in February 1856 and himself took up the position of the Governor of Kashmir under him.

THE INDIAN MUTINY

Even after his abdiction Maharaja Gulab Singh continued to take interest in the affairs of the State. It was thus that at the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny in May 1857, while he was on his death bed, he strongly advised his son, to side with the British in the interest of the security of the State; having foreseen that it would be they who would ultimately win. As a result, the new Maharaja ordered his Prime Minister Jawala Sahai to proceed to Rawalpindi and offer all the resources of the State to the British Government. The offer of military and financial assistance thus made was accepted by the British. Consequently a force under the command of Diwan Hari Chand was placed at the disposal of the British requirements to be used as and how they may wish to do. Some new units appear to have been raised in anticipation of the British requirements. Among these was an artillery unit which was named Bijli Topkahana.[45] This was ultimately to become the famous 1st J&K Mountain Battery which earned a great name during the World War of 1939-45. It was armed with four brass field guns of Jammu manufacture drawn by mules and horses. One infantry unit was also raised during this period under the command of Commandant Anant Singh and was designated as the Raghunath Battallion. The class composition was mixed which included

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45. Record of Service Kashmir State Units compiled in 1928

Rajputs, Gorkhas, Brahmins, Muslims, Pakhans and Paodias etc.[46]

Though the British had outwardly accepted the offer of the Maharaja, they seem to have remained hesistant in making use of the State troops for quite sometime. Two factors appear to have ~~worked on their minds which had resulted in this state of~~ contributed towards the British indecision. One was their inherent distrust of Gulab Singh, which made them to swallow a rumour that ~~Gulab Singh~~ the maharaja was planning to palm off to the ~~British~~ them his Purbiah troops ~~which~~ who were, ~~themselves~~ they believed, already on the verge of mutiny in the State, and ~~record~~ second the low impression that they appear to have had about the efficiency of the state troops due to, perhaps, the contempt they had for all that was Indian. This indecision continued even after Maharaja Gulab Singh's death on 30 June and they finally decided to use the State troops at Delhi sometime in August 1857 only. In order to ensure that the right type of troops were being sent by the Maharaja, the Chief Commissioner of Punjab was asked by the Governor General to review the State contingent on its arrival at Jullundur. The idea was that if the troops proved to be good they would be sent to Delhi and if not then they could be sent to some inactive area where there would be little requirement for their use.[47]

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46. There is much confusion about the date of raising of Raghunath. In 1913 Col Budhi Singh while recounting the services of rendered to the State by his ancestors catgorically mentions that Raghunath Regiment was held in reserve for the Chilas Campaign. The record of service of the Regiment compiled in 1928 under the signatures of Lt Col Baikunth Singh also gives the date of raising as 1852 without mentioning the Chilas Campaign. The two put together suggest that the Regiment was raised by Prince Ranbir Singh in 1852 when he was ordered by the father to proceed to Chilas in aid of Diwan Hari Chand. As we have seen ultimately there was no requirement for him to go. However, the record of service of unit compiled earlier in 1902 under the signatures of Lt Col Bhagwan Singh, gives the raising year 1857. (Jammu Archives Mil Block B-17 of 1902). This date is supported by the J&K Army List of 1912. Army List in 1923 shows the year as 1871 which is obviously wrong. Subsequent Army Lists of 1938 and 1944 show the year of raising as 1856.

47. National Archives Foreign Secret 412-15 of 18 Dec 1857

The contingent that reached Jullundur under the command of Diwan Hari Chand consisted of about 2600 men, 6 hourse artillery guns and 24 'Sher Bachas'. The men were divided into four regiments of infantry (namely Raghubir, Brij Raj, Gowardhan and Narain), Diwan's body guard company of Pathans, a squadron of cavalry, some gunners and some sappers and Miners. The animal transport with the contingent consisted of 14 houses, 387 ponnies, 2 elephants, 359 camels and 8 Ekkas (probably for the conveyance of officers). Five Dolis (Planquins) were included in the transport element for casulty evacuation. There was no uniformity in the organisation of the four battalions, but generally each battalion consisted of one Colonel, one adujtant, one Major, 14 to 17 Subedars and Jamadars, one 'Nishanchu' (standard bearer) and 414 to 476 sepoys. The total number of the senior officers in the force consisted of force 3 Colonels, 3 Kumedans and 6 adjutants.[48]

On reviewing the troops at a march past, the Commissioner appears to have been very much impressed by the State troops. In the report submitted to the Government by his Secretary, special mention was made of the fact that the troops were all Dogras, (and not Purbiahs as had been rumoured) who were all known to make "docile, intelligent and good soldiers". The report, which gives an insight into the condition of the State army of thosedays goes on to say that the "infantry are armed with 'Barmar' (a long musket with flint lock which carries a considerable distance) and swords. They have no bayonets and are ill able to resist a formidable attack of the cavalry. ~~is the most showy but~~ Their guns are well horsed and equipped. The Cavalry is the most showy but least serviceable of the three arms. Each swivel (Sher Bacha) was carried by two Rajputs and as they passed in review, the Chief

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48. Ibid

Commissioner could not but think that had our native soldiers been required to carry such heavy weapons, many would have demurred- perhaps on the score of caste. The Rajputs, however, stepped out vigorously' and lightly, apparently proud of their burden. All the soldiers were sufficiently clad with the exception that they neither had great coats nor any substitute for that useful garment".[49] The report shows that the State army had moved a long way since 1849-50 when the first steps were taken in towards improvement in drill, equipment and efficiency.

After the review the Government of India decided to use the State troops in active operations against the rebels at Delhi. The Commissioner offered to give extra allowances to the troops for this purpose but Diwan Hari Chand declined the offer and informed the Commissioner that all the troops who had come to the aid of the British had already been granted a 50% increase in pay by the State. The Commissioner then gave to the troops presents worth five thousand rupees and promised pensions on behalf of the British Government for thos who got killed or wounded in the fighting.[50] Having the satisfied himself the Commissioner directed the State troops to proceed to Delhi where the contingent was to form part of the 4th Column of Major General Wilson's force. Captain R C Lawrence was appointed the Political Commissioner with the State force.[51]

The 4th Column of which the State force formed part was commanded by Major Reids and was allotted the task of attacking the rebel gun positions in the Kishenganj suburb, while the other

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49. Ibid- Report of the offg Secy to the Chief Commissioner in the Punjab
50. Ibid
51. Ibid- Foreign Pol No 154/9 of 2 July 1858

columns assaulted the city of Delhi. The mutineers facing the 4th column were in great strength duly supported by heavy guns, and the ground, which was broken and rugged, was well suited for defence. The defences had been made all the more formidable owing to a series of walls that had been erected in front of the gun positions; the last of which was of considerable height and too difficult to scale.[52]

The assault of the 4th column went in on 14th September, but it soon pettered out in face of heavy enemy fire. In fact, ultimately it turned into a complete rout. Many European troops left the field in a disgraceful manner and took refuge in their camps. They had to be hunted out by their officers and brought back to the field. The Jammu troops had also not been able to make any headway, but while they had been forced to go to the ground and take cover, not a single Dogra left the field as his British counterpart had done. This fact got highlighted in the court of inquiry that was conducted after the debacle. Major Reids was severely wounded and had to be evacuated. Captain Lawrence then took over the command of the 4th column with the local rank of Lieut Colonel.[53]

Although the attack of the 4th column had failed miserably it did serve its purpose to an extent. It had indeed helped in distracting the attention of the mutineers from the main attack on the City. They had been forced to divert much of their resources towards this side, making it easier for other columns to succeed.

After the fall of Delhi, the British quickly advanced on Rohtak, Jhajjar and Dadree and forestalled occupation of these places by the mutineers. Two regiments from Dewan Hari Chand's

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52. Ibid

53. Ibid

force were employed, one each at Rohtak and Jhajjar, in the occupation of these places and also in the disarming of their inhabitants. At Jhajjar alone upwards of 30,000 people were disarmed with the help of the Jammu troops. One regiment which had been retained at Delhi was employed in guarding the Kabul Gate and the Mori Bastion. Unfortunately while the troops were being employed on these tasks Cholera broke out among them, which took a heavy toll of life. As many as 81 personnel from the force died of the disease. These included two officers one of whom was Diwan Hari Chand himself. This was indeed a sad end to the life of Diwan Hari Chand whose services to the State as a soldier cum administrator had been of the highest order. The work of the contingent was however not allowed to suffer on account of the great loss suffered by the army and the State and Diwan Nihal Chand, younger brother of Hari Chand, was despatched post haste to Delhi to take over the command of the contingent.[54]

The State force was subsequently relieved by troops from Patiala State, and allowed to return to Jammu via Rohtak, Karnal, Ludhiana and Jullundur under the political charge of Captain Mocatta. They had suffered one Adjutant, 3 Jemadars and 29 other ranks wounded in operations against the mutineers. Added to these casualties were two officers and 79 other ranks who died of cholera.[55]

While Diwan Hari Chand's contingent was out against the mutineers in British India, the rest of the State troops were engaged in flushing out the rebels who had sought shelter in the State territory adjoining the British Indian territories. One party of 43 mutineers from the 55th Regiment of the Native Infantry was rounded up and despatched to Hazara via Muzaffarabad on 25th August

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54. Ibid
55. Ibid

Maharaja Shri Ranbir Singh

August 1857. The maximum number was, however, rounded up in Jasrota where a total of 572 Sialkot mutineers were apprehended ov over the period, and handed over to the British.[56]

The British had obviously under-estimated the value of the State's offer of aid to them at the time it was made. Subsequently they seem to have been more than satisfied with the utility of such aid particularly with the performance of the State Troops both in British India as well as within the State. The work of the State troops was highly commended in an official communication to the Maharaja of Kashmir. In recognition of the help given by him the Maharaja was offered a Jagir in Oudh but this was declined by him on the plea that he had acted as a friend and an ally of the British and not as a mercenary.[57] How much the British valued the help rendered by the State can, however, be best gauged from the noting by the Governor General of India on a file, eleven years after the event. Acknowledging the fact that the help rendered by Maharaja Gulab Singh went decisively in their favour Lord Sir John Lawrence Governor General of India in 1868 wrote in a minute that "had Maharaja Gulab Singh turned against us, his ability, his prestige, his experience would have produced a great reaction against us; to say nothing of the material means at his disposal."[58]

MIAN SAHIB'S COMPANY

Three years after the birth of Prince Pratap Singh, his father Maharaja Ranbir Singh ordered that small boys from good families be collected and formed into a company which was to be known as 'Mian Sahib Ki Company! Consequently the company was raised in 1853 with a strength of 30 boys. No arms were issued to

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56. Ibid Foreign Secret No 53 of 25 Sep 1857
57. J&K Adm Report for the year 1936-37
58. Gazetteer of Kashmir & Ladakh pp 136-137

the boys who were perhaps two small to handle them, but they were required to wear uniform (white kurta and black pant). The strength of the company was raised to 150 fully grown men in 1858 and Barmar rifles were issued to them. The uniform was changed to ~~corplete~~ complete red including a red turban. Ultimately the unit was built up to a strength of 600 officers and men in 1873 and named Raghupratap. Regimental Colours were issued the same year. The red uniform was retained.[59] The Raghu Pratap which is today the Ist Battalion of the Jammu and Kashmir Rifles may therefore well claim its origin to the year 1858 if not 1853.

FINAL SUBJUGATION OF GILGIT[60]

After being relieved of his obligation of aid to the British during the period of the Mutiny, Maharaja Ranbir Singh turned his attention towards retriving his lost position in Gilgit. It was, however, not before 1860 that an expedition against Gauhar Rehaman, the usurper of Gilgit, could be fitted out. That year a strong column of the State Force under Colonel Devi Singh Narania crossed the Indus and entered Gilgit. During the eight years of rule over Gilgit which was interrupted by the Dogras once or twice for short durations, Gauhar Rehman had constructed a massive fort at Gilgit which was believed by the Dards to be impregnable. On crossing the Indus Colonel Devi Singh headed straight for this fort, determined to reduce it and ~~alongwith it to~~ smash for ever the authority of Gauhar Rehman. Fortunately for Gauhar Rehman, he was not destined to suffer this indignity and just before the Dogras reached Gilgit

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59. Jammu Archives, Mil Block B-17 of 1902

60. Story constructed from information contained in National Archives Foreign Secret # 34-60B July 1877, Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh pp 137-138, J&K Adm Report for the year 19 1936-37, Draft History of Jammu and Kashmir Rifles 1820 to 1963 produced by the Regimental Centre. pp17-21

he died a natural death. The death of their leader followed immediately by the arrival of the Dogras greatly demoralised the Dards inside the fort. As it was, they had little heart left in the flight, but when the first salvo fired from the Dogra guns hit the main gate of the fort, killing, among others, Gaur Rehman's Wazir, the garrison hastened to surrender. Im this way Gilgit was captured by the Dogras for the fourth time never to be lost again.

With the affairs at Gilgit settled Devi Singh now moved to destroy the sources which had created all the trouble for the Dogras in Gilgit. Yasin had been, as we have seen, a major source of trouble and although Gauhar Rehman had died, his brother Malik Aman, who was a mischief monger only a shade less, was still there. The intention was not to hold Yasin by but only to ensure that the Yasinis created no more trouble, ~~and this only to ensure that the Yasinis created no more trouble,~~ and this was sought to be achieved by installing a nominee of the Kashmir Durbar on the 'Gaddi' of Yasin. Accordingly, when Devi Singh reached Yasin unopposed, Azmat Shah, who was favourably disposed towards the Dogras, was made the new ruler of Yasin. After this a buffer was sought to be created between Yasin and Gilgit by separating Punial from Yasin, reverting to the situation as it existed before Gauhar Rehman had annexed Punial to Yasin. Raja Isa Bagdur of Punial who, having incurred the wrath of Gauhar Rehman, had taken rufuge at the Dogra Court was reinstated to the Chiefship of his old principality on the condition that Punial be a tributory of the Jammu and Kashmir State. Lastly to prevent the forces of Yasin and Hunza combining against Gilgit as of yore, the friendly buffer principality of Punial was extended northwards by adding to it the Yasin territory of Ishkoman.

No sooner had the Dogras left Yasin than Malik Aman returned and expelled Azmat Shah. Azmat Shah, in fact reached Gilgit close at the heels of Colonel Devi Singhs force. So Yasin once again passed into the hands of a Chief, hostile towards the Kashmir Durbar. Isa Bagdur, however, remained firmly saddled at Punial (incl Ishkoman) and with the territory of this strong and stead-fastly loyal chief interposed between Gilgit and Yasin, no immediate necessity for action against Malik Aman was felt. Only Isa Bagdur was encoureged to make forays into Yasin to keep Malik Aman on the defensive. Isa Bagdur also helped the Kashmir Durbar in cultivating some Chitrali chiefs, who were hostile to Malik Aman.

Although the arrangements made by the Dogras in creating a counterforce against Yasin had greatly diminished any direct threat to Gilgit, it failed to prevent Malik Aman from creating disturbances of other nature. His men, for instance, started looting merchants between Gilgit and Badkashan and made the Highway through Yasin most unsafe. So much so that even some messengers of the Maharaja were robbed and imprisoned by the Yasinis. A punitive expedition under Colonel Hoshiara (Ramgole Regiment) was therefore, despatched from Gilgit to Yasin in 1863. To oppose the Dogras the Yasinis collected in large numbers at Mayorikot. In the battle that ensued the Yasinis were completely routed and they dispersed in all direction. Malik Amam himself fled to the hills while some of his men sought shelter in the fort. These were pursued by the Dogras who burst into the fort before the Dards had had time to organise their defences and in the hand to hand fighting that followed the Yasinis were slaughters in larger numbers. The Dogra victory had been decisive and the Yasini Chiefs had been completely subjugated. Once again Yasin was made a tributory of the Jammu and Kashmir State and it remained so for some time to come.

INVASION OF GILGIT BY IMAN-UL-MULK-1866[61]

The subjugation of Yasin did not give the expected respite on the Gilgit frontier. The people of Hunza now started looting and killing traders passing through the Pamirs. Consequently a punitive expedition to Hunza was arranged. As the advance to Hunza had to pass through Nagar, the Dogras made an alliance with the ruler of Nagar, who was not too kindly disposed towards the ruler of Hunza. The Dogra force then moved along the left bank of the Hunza river and reached a place opposite to the Hunza fort on the right bank. Here the force was required to cross the river for an attack on the fort but the Dogras were unable to cross immediately due to the bridge having been blown up and the high cliffs on both sides of the river not being negotiable. Even as efforts for locating a suitable crossing site were being made the ruler of Nagar in a surprise move broke off his alliance with the ~~invaders~~ Dogras and although he committed no hostile act as such, the very thought of having their route of withdrawal through Nagar cut, created panic among the Dogras, which had them to beat a hasty retreat through Nagar back to Gilgit.

This display of weakness by the Dogras greatly encouraged their old enemies, and Yasin combined with Chitral to attack Gilgit. The attack was led by the Mehtar of Chitral himself and reducing most of the Dogra forts on the way he laid seige to Sher fort in Pundial which was garrisoned by 100 Dogras of the Ramgol Battalion, and some Punialis under Raja Isa Bagdur. This fort was located at a very strategic place which effectively dominated the direct route to Gilgit. Iman-ul-Mulk, therefore, made frantic attempts at reducing the fort before advancing on Gilgit but none succeeded. Ultimately he was compelled to leave it alone and

61. Ibid

instead make a long detour to reach Gilgit.

The delay caused to the invaders by the garrison of the Sher fort proved to be of immense value to the Dogra garrisons in Gilgit. They had received sufficient warning of the invasion and by the time Iman-ul-Mulk reached Gilgit, the Dogras had prepared themselves adequately for a long seige. The defenders were able to not only ward off all attacks but also inflict heavy casualties on the Chitralis. The Gilgit fort thus held on till reinforcements under Wazir ZoraWar Singh and Colonel Bijey Singh arrived from Kashmir. Iman-ul-Mulk considered discretion as the better form of valour and as soon as he sighted the Dogra relief column he lifted the seige and fled to his country in not too dignified a manner.

Wazir Zorawar Singh and Colonel Bijey Singh then took this opportunity of punishing the Darelis who had involved themselves on the side of the Yasinis during the invasion of Gilgit. The main column, of which the Raghunath and Ramgole Battalions formed part[62], advanced along the Naupura ravine while a subsidary column under Bakshi Radha Krishen was pushed out along a side valley via Singal. A combined Dareli and Yasini Column moved up to meet the invasion and blocked the Dogra passage at a place where the Naupura ravine just meets the Darel Valley. It was a naturally strong defensive position with high cliffs protecting its flanks. Colonel Bijey Singh, however, was an experienced Commander and before long his troops had scaled the heights and turned the enemy flank; forcing him to flee. After two days Bakshi Radha Krishen also joined up with

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62. Jammu Archives Mil Block B-17 of 1902

the main column and the whole force then entered well into the heart of Daral without any opposition. Colonel Bijay Singh and Wazir Zorawar stayed in Darel for a week while the elders of Darel made their submission. The Dogras had made the Darelis realise that their country was not as in-accessable as they had made it out to be till now. The Darelis on their part accepted the Dogra suzereignty and never again created trouble for their suzereign.

The end of Dogra troubles was, however, no where in sight yet. The Raja of Yasin laid seige to the Dogra forts in Punial in 1867 but he fled on appearance of Dogra troops from Gilgit under Bakshi Radha Krishen. In the following year Mir Wali expelled Mulk Aman from Yasin with the help of the Mehtar of Citral and became the Chief himself. He, however, did not stay in this position for long and in 1870 was made to flee Yasin as a result of Mehtar's conspiracy to instal in his place a more amenable Pehalwan Khan. As Pehalwan Khan professed allegience to the Mehtar of Chitral the governorship of Mastuj was also conferred on him. By 1870, therefore, Chitral Mastuj and Yasin had combined more effectively against Kashmir.

BLACK MOUNTAIN EXPEDITION- 1868

In 1868 the tribes inhabiting the independent territory of Black Mountains beyond Oghi (Agror) began to once again trouble the British by making raids into their territory. For better control over these tribes the British established a police post at Oghi. When this post was raided by the Yusafzia tribes, the British decided on a punitive expedition into the Black Mountains. This, in fact, was to be their second expedition to the area- the first one (which was of no concern to the Kashmir State) having been led in 1852. The 1868 expedition is of interest

to us as Maharaja Ranbir Singh offered the services of two of his regiments for this expedition. The offer was accepted and the two regiments with a strength of approximately 1200 men left the State to join Brig General A T Wilder's expeditionary force that had assembled at Agror sometime in September 1868.[63]

The advance up the Black Mountains commenced on 03 October. The J&K troops formed part of the reserve echelon of the force. On the night of 6/7 October the weather changed for the worse as it began to rain heavily. The rain was then followed by snow and the troops, who had neither tents nor baggage were subjected to a spell of intense discomfort. The State troops displayed good discipline and endurance while bearing this discomfort. The campaign, however, did not last long and the tribals having submitted, it came to an end on 10th October.[64] The State troops had not been used in active operations but the expedition had provided a good opportunity for training which was fully made use of. The troops who took part in the Hazara (Black Mountain) campaign were subsequently awarded the North West Frontier clasp.

RAISING OF THE BODY GUARDS

In 1868 two units were raised as the Maharaja's Body Guards. One was an artillery unit which was raised under the command of Mian Sukhu and designated as the Body Guard battary.[65] The other was an infantry unit in which sons of Lambardars ~~Ke~~ were enlisted and as such this unit was designated as "Lambardar ke Putar" (sons of Lambarda) Battallion. It was in fact a boys battalion which was to feed other regiments as and when the boys came of age. The system of enlisting sons of Lambardars continued

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63. History of the 5th Royal Gurkha Rifles (Frontier Force)1858 to 1928 pp 26-28
64. Ibid
65. Jammu Archives ~~of~~ Mil Block B-17 of 1902

upto 1871. Initially the boys were paid Rs. 8/- (chilki)* monthly besides the weekly issues of soap, curd and sweetmeats. Subsequently these boys were given regular pay but each according to the status of his father. For instance while the son of a first class Lambardar got Rs. 14/- (chilki) the son of a Lambardar who was class III got only Rs. 11/- per month. The brothers of Lambardars were also enrolled in this unit but they received a rupee less than the sons. At the time of raising, the battalion was commanded by Jamadar Kanhiya. The following year when the strength rose to 400 it was put under Commandant Lakha. The system of enlisting the sons of the Lambardars not having proved successful, it was discontinued and in 1871 the unit was reorganised as a regular battalion and redesignated as the Body Guard Battalion, with Maharaja Ranbir Singh as its Colonel.[66] This battalion was ultimately to become the 2nd Jammu and Kashmir Rifles of the Indian Army.

THE GILGIT FRONTIER STABLISHED

Although the Mehtar of Chitral had greatly improved his capacity for making mischief on the Gilgit frontier (after he succeeded in adding Mastuj and Yasin to his territory in 1870) he could not do much against the Dogras by himself. He, therefore, sought the intervention of the British for the restoration of Gilgit and Punial to Chitral. The British, however, refused to oblige, as their interests lay in these territories remaining under the Maharaja of Kashmir which (with their grip over the State tightening each day) was as good as these being under their own control. The Mehtar was then left with no alternative but to

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66. Ibid

* State coinage. one chilki rupee being equal to 10 annas of British Indian coinage.

accept the fact of the Dogra rule in Gilgit and consequently tried to cultivate the friendship of the Maharaja. The friendly overtures of the Mehtar were favourably responded to by the Maharaja and envoys were exchanged between the two States in 1871. This desire on the part of the Iman-ul-Malik for friendship with the Dogras was also prompted by the threat that he was facing from the Amir of Kabul who had begun to assert his claim to suzereignty over Chitral; it being a dependency of Badkashan. Maharaja Ranbir Singh on the other hand was keen on the friendship of the Mehtar of Chitral as that alone could stablish the Gilgit frontier, which task was occupying his greatest attention in those days. So he went a step forward and in 1877 offered to pay regular subsidy to the Mehtar to compensate him for the fall in his revenue which would result from the cessation of the Chitrali raids and highway robberies. Needless to say that this arrangement between the Maharaja and the Mehtar had the blessings and the approval of the British who were themselves interested in weaning away Chitral from Afghanistan. In fact this arrangement was discussed at length between the Maharaja and the Viceroy in a meeting specially arranged at Madhopur in 1876.[67]

The other destablising factor on the Gilgit frontier was the continuous feuds between the people of Hunza and Nagar. The inhabitants of the two principalities came from one stock and spoke the same language but there had been in the past considerable amount of ill feelings between the two communities. One reason for this probably was religious intolerance. While the people of Hunza were Maulais (that is followers of His Highness the Agha Khan) those of Nagar were Shias. Although both the

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67. National Archives Foreign Secret 34-60 B of July 1877

principalities had entered into an alliance of friendship with the Dogras in 1870, their mutual enmity and mistrust caused occasional disturbance on the frontier. The immediate point at dispute was the claim that both the states laid to Chalt and Chaprot forts and the connecting villages that lay between Hunza-Nagar and Gilgit, and they often fought it out on that account. Unable to resolve their dispute the Maharaja of Kashmir offered to occupy the area with his troops jointly with those of Hunza and Nagar and thus remove the bone of contention between the two. This was probably not agreed to by the Hunza chief and the Maharaja finding no other way out occupied the two forts with his troops in conjunction with those of Nagar. From then onwards right upto 1886 Chalt and Chaprot were held jointly by the J&K and Nagar troops. In 1886 the chief of Hunza who had been left sulking all this while, obtained the withdrawal of the Na-gar troops from the two forts, through the British intervention, after he agreed to these being held by the J&K State force only.[68]

There was a general alert in the State forces due to the threatening attitude of certain other tribes across the Gilgit frontier in 1877. As a matter of fact four regiments and some irregulars were actually moved to Gilgit as a precautionary measure. No untoward incident, however, occured and the alert was duly called off.[69]

RE-ARMAMENT AND REORGANISATION-1877

During the meeting between the Viceroty and the Maharaja at Madhopur in 1876 the former offered 5000 rifles for the State

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68. Memoranda on the Indian States 1932 (Govt of India) Publication Calcutta p 83.
69. National Archives Foreign Secret 34-60 B of July 1877

force which the Maharaja gratefully accepted. Consequently 4000 Enfield and one thousand Snider rifles with 200 rounds per rifle of the former and 100 rounds per rifle of the later were presented to the State by the British.[70] How these were distributed among the various units of the infantry is not known. However, considering the number of the weapons received, these could not have been issued to more than six or seven battalions. That also if the regular supply of the ammunition on payment had been assured to the State. Be it as it may, the prime need at that moment was the training of the men in the use of these weapons before these could be issued to them. Consequently on being presented with the new rifles, the Maharaja sought the permission of the Indian Government for the attachment of some non commissioned officers (NCOs) and sepoys of his army to an Indian Army regiment for training in the use of these weapons. The permission was granted and about 21 NCOS and sepoys proceeded to Sialkot for attachment with 15 Sikh. These men were imparted training only from 15 June to 29th August 1877 and considering the short period of training, the results achieved were remarkable even by British standards. At the end of the course the men were reported upon by Brigadier General J E Michell, Commander Sialkot brigade. He considered them to be "smart and cleanly in appearance" who gave their words of command in English and in a soldier-like way. Sepoy Bahira was adjudged the best shot, having scored 19 out of a possible score of 20 points at 650 yards range.[71] There is no record of other batches having gone for such attachments. Probably some more were sent and these men in turn conducted cadres in the State to train the rest.

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70. Ibid
71. Ibid Foreign Secret No 96-98 of Aug 1877 and No 9 of Dec 1877

Alongwith the rifles the British also presented to the State four rifled 7 pounder guns complete with carriage and equipment, for one mountain battery. The State decided to resquip the Bijli Topkhana with these guns; which was thereafter designated as No. 7 Battery.[72]

The total strength of the State Force had gradually risen from 22,600 that it was in 1846 to about 30,000 in 1877. This included the 'Nizamat' which was created in about 1871. The Nizamat was the territorial army (infantry) which consisted of about seven regiments- a regiment each from the seven districts of Jammu Province Each regiment was under a commandant and was organised in the same way as the battalions of the 'Jangi Fauj'. The men were the sons of Zamindars who were often granted cultivable land in lieu of pay and who were employed within the limits of their own 'Zillas' (districts). The men spent four to five months every year at their homes looking after their fields. The whole of the Nizamat was under the overall command of a colonel and was administered directly by the Prime Minister of the State. This force was drawn on, from time to time, for making up deficiencies in the 'Jangi Fauj' - to which it acted as the principal source of supply of manpower.[73]

In 1877 a process of reorganisation of the Kashmir State Force was started with the aim of making it more weildy and suitable for employment in modern warfare. The first step was for some reduction of superior officers which was effected by grouping two battalions together to form one regiment and placing a colonel incharge of two regiments. The battalions, however, continued to maintain their identity. After this had been achieved to some degree, the next step

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72. Ibid B No 34-60 B of July 1877
73. Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh pp 138-158

that followed was the organisation of the entire force into four small "corps-de-armees" under the name of Columns. The standard organisation of the column included four regiments of infantry, one regiment of Cavalry, three batteries of artillery, four companies of Sappers and Miners and 9 Dastas of 'Khula Fauj'. These units represented a total strength of 5,612 men. This organisation does not, however, seem to have been put into practice as such. The columns that were actually formed did not adhere to the standard organisation that was laid down. In all, four columns or commands were formed each under a Sanadi or a General and the units that were grouped under each appear to have been more a matter of administrative convenience than tactical necessity. The standard organisation was perhaps reserved for operations only and what actually emerged by 1880 was as under:-[74]

(a) General Inder Singh's Command:- Strength 4,752.

	Unit	Strength	Class	Commander
i)	Raghu Pratap	630	Dogras	Commandant Inder Singh
ii)	Bijli	721	"	Colonel Baj Singh
iii)	Raghunath	821	"	Commandant Nihalu
iv)	Lachman	955	"	Commandant Devi
v)	Brij Raj	785	"	Commandant Gangu
vi)	Govind	840	" & Sikh	Commandant Lakhu

(b) General Labh's Command:- Strength 3,714

i)	Ruder	635	Purbeas	Commandant Chunu
ii)	Shivnab	681	Mixed	Commandant Manju

74. Ibid. Facts and figures not vouched for by the authors.

iii)	Ram	586	Mixed	Commandant Bhagat
iv)	Fateh Shivji	695	"	Commandant Nathu
v)	Body Guard	527	"	Commandant Chandu
vi)	Artillery	750	"	Commandant Man Singh

(c) General Chatar Singh's Command:- Strength 4,959

i)	Hunuman	715	Gorkhas	Commandant Khoji
ii)	Partap	533	"	Colonel Devia
iii)	Ramgol	385	Dogras	Commandant Laba
iv)	Balbudhar	755	-	Commandant Durga Prasad
v)	Narain	590	Dogras	Commandant Balbudhar
vi)	Devi	856	Chibalis	Colonel Daru
vii)	Raghbbir	925	Dogras	Commandant Suraj

(d) General Shankar Singh's Command:- Strength 16,169

i)	Sher Bachas	599	Dogras	Colonel Pujar Singh
ii)	Busheshwar	735	"	Commandant Ganesh
iii)	Suraj	455	-	Commandant Narain Singh
iv)	Narsing	845	Gorkha	Commandant Devi
v)	Gopal	996	-	Commandant Mata Singh
vi)	Cavalry	2595	-	Colonel Hari Singh
vii)	Irregulars	3311	-	Under Bakshi Mul Raj
viii)	Irregulars	4595	-	Under Dewan Sant Ram
ix)	Sepoys of the fort	1255	-	- - -
x)	Nizamat	483	-	Colonel Wazir Hari Singh
xi)	Police	300	-	Under Basawa Singh

Total all Commands - 29,594

The command and control in the columns was loose and the colonels usually identified themselves entirely with the regiment with which they happened to be quartered, and exercised little authority over regiments at a distance, and nominally under them. Even the combining of the two battalions into one regiment does not seem to have been carried out fully even as late as 1882 and the

battalions continued to function as separate regiments till then.[75]

In addition to the General, each column had a Bakshi who was also known as 'Officer Column'. He was a civilian responsible for the entire administration of the column. He ranked next to the General and received pay only marginally less than him. Every thing connected with pay, equipment, cloghing and war like supplies for his column was under his charge. Weakness in the central authority sometimes permitted him to interfere in matters of drill and discipline which often became a source of friction between him and the senior combatant Officers.[76]

The standard organisation of the battalion fixed its strength at about 450 and consisted of the Commandant, one adjutant one Major, 4 Subedars, 8 Jamadars, 32 Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOS) (including 4 seargents and 4 Kurias), and 400 sepoys. The Adjutant was the ex-officio Second in Command of the battation while the Wardi Major fulfilled the duties of the adjutant as we understand them today. The Major acted as the regimental pay master and the Quarter Master combined. He stood juinor to the Adjutant in seniority. The Combat element in the battalion comsisted of four companies each being commanded by a Subedar. The seargent acted as the pay Havildar of the Company. He kept the resters, and did all the writing work of his Company ~~kept the resters, and did all the writing work of his Company~~ in which he was assisted by the 'Kuria' (clerk).[78]

The Cavalry also was put through some reorganisation to suit the column formation. The cavalry was part of the 'Khula Fauj' and it remained to be based on the 'Sildar' system. It was

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75. Ibid
76. Ibid
77. Ibid

only that the different sub units called 'Dehras' were now merged to form four regiments- one each for the four columns. Each regiment was composed of four troops and had one Commandant, one Adjutant, one Wurdi Major, one Major, four Risaldars, 40 NCOs (including four Seargents) and 250 Sowars. The regiment was therefore not the regiment as we understand today. It could perhaps more appropriately be called a Squadron plus or at the most a double squadron. The squadron of cuirassiers was incorporated into one of the regiments after its had been withdrawn cuirasses were taken into store.[78]

Three batteries of different calibres were attached to each column. One battery was of 6 x 10 pounders, one of 6 x 4 pounders and one mountain battery of 4 guns. The smooth bore 3 pounder mountain guns were of local make; in imitation of those presented by the British in 1877. With the exception of the particular battery (No: 7) formed out of the equipment presented by the British which was mounted on mules, mountain guns of other batteries were carried on man pack basis as before. Consequently while the mule battery had only four Havildars, 8 Naiks and 48 'Golundazis' (gunners) the 'Dasti' Topkhana had as many as 144 'Golundazis' each (36 per gun). These guns could be put together and got ready for action in a minute and a half. Subsequently 'Kahars' (carriers) were employed for the carriage of the guns like the coolie batteries in Nepal. A field battery consisted of one Commandant, one Major, 4 Jamadars, 6 Havildars, 1 Seargent, 12 Naiks, one Kuria and 71 'Golundazis'.[79]

There were several kinds of uniforms in use in 1877. There was firstly the full dress, consisting of scarlet tunic and white trousers given by the State every four or five years. Then there was the suit of white drill given by the state every second year.

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78. Ibid
79. Ibid

The third was a snuff coloured suit of thin 'puttu' (coarse woollen cloth) which was formerly supplied every second year and charged to the sepoy, was now given yearly; the price being included in the monthly deductions from the soldier's pay. A thick 'puttu' coat was issued to the sepoy every third year and he was charged Rs. 4/- and annas 8 at the time of the issue.[80]

In 1879-80 a uniform of french grey felting with red facing was introduced in some regiments. It was thick, warm and serviceable and as such in 1881-82 it was planned to clothe the whole army with it for ordinary wear; reserving the scarlet for use on special occasions only. The officers were supplied with uniforms on as required basis at their own cost. The uniform of a Sanadi or General cost about Rs. 300/-. The full dress for the artillery men was a dark blue tunic braided in the front with yellow lace like in the British horse artillery.[81]

Although the State had a large army, the condition of its weapons does not appear to have been too good even in 1880. The only good weapons that the army had were the 5000 rifles presented by the British. This number apart from being too small for such a large army, the ammunition for these was strictly controlled by the British. Some attempt seems to have been made by the Maharaja for updating the weapons by improving the quality and design of the local manufacture. In 1879 'Kashmiri Enfield' appears to have been brought into use which was probably a copy of the Enfield rifle presented by the British. Also, in order to free himself from dependence on the British for ammunition, attempts appear to have been made to manufacture Snider and Enfield ammunition in the Jammu gum powder factory.

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80. Ibid
81. Ibid

This is evident from the fact that the Maharaja asked for permission for employing in his factory a native (Indian) from outside the State who was well versed in the manufacture of the gun powder. Knowing that the factory already had gun powder experts, the British suspected that the Maharaja was trying to import expertise for the manufacture of ammunition for the new weapons or perhaps for the manufacture of the new types of rifles. ~~themselves~~ Although the permission was granted the State was not able to do anything in this regard as the British kept a close watch on what went on in the factory through their Officer on Special Duty who had been given special instructions regarding this.[82]

In the beginning of 1877, Maharaja Ranbir Singh was granted the Honorary rank of General by the British Government.

THE SECOND AFGHAN WAR

In 1878 Russia was permitted by the Afghans to establish her mission at Kabul but when the British tried to do the same Amir Sher Ali resisted the move. As a matter of fact the British mission headed by Sir Neville Chamberlian was forcibly prevented from entering Afghanistan. The insult heaped on the British by Sher Ali thus, set off the Second Afghan War. Operations commenced on 21st November 1878 and within the next six months Sher Ali was forced to flee the country, while his son Yakub Khan who became the new Amir sued for peace. Yakub Khan bound himself, in general terms to conduct his country's relations with foreign states in accordance with the advice and wishes of the British Government. Major Cavagnari was then appointed as the British representative at Kabul. The Afghan army was, however, not happy with this arrangement and in September 1879 the mutinous soldiery attacked the British Residency

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82. Ibid

and all within were done to death. Although the Amir disowned responsibility for the conduct of the mutineers, the British decided to exact retribution for this outrage and the campaign re-opened in September itself.[83]

On hearing the news of the massacre, the Maharaja of Kashmir promptly offered his troops to the British for employment in their war with Afghanistan. The offer was made through Mr F Henvy, Officer on Special Duty on 26th Septemner 1879. The Maharaja's representative Diwan Anant Ram made it known to Henvy that the Maharaja could send a column each to Kabul, Hunza and Badkashan, and if need be he could sent the entire army entrusting the defence of the State to the British. The offer provided an opportunity to Henvy to obtain information about the State army and he questioned the Diwan regarding this at length. Apparently information regarding the army was still being kept a closely guarded secret from the British and the British intelligence agencies even at this stage seem to have been hard-pit-to in gaining a clear picture.

Diwan Anant Ram disclosed to Henvy that the regular army consisted of 23000 infantry, 1400 cavalry and 66 artillery pieces. Of these 5000 men were on leave at that time and the remaining were deployed as under :-[84]

Gilgit, Skardu etc	3200
Kashmir	5000
Muzaffarabad	1500
Jammu	4000
Jasrota	2800
Chibal and Naushehra	1500

The British ultimately asked for just a small contingent of the infantry, supported by artillery, to be sent to Afghanistan as a token of Kashmir's assistance towards the British cause. Aparently

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83. History of the 5th Royal Gurkha Rifles (FF) 1858 to 1928

84. National Archives Foreign Pol A No 566/72 of Nov 1879

this contingent was not used in active operations which lasted till the middle of 1880, and continued to form part of the reserve echlon throughout the campaign.

RISING BRITISH INTERESTS IN GILGIT

The last five years of Majaraja Ranbir Singh's rule were years of relative peace. On his death in 1885 his son, now 35 years old, ascended the 'Gaddi'. He had inherited from his father a fairly well administered State with peace on its frontiers. Besides he had inherited a large army, about 28000 strong which, though not as well equipped as one would have liked it to be, was quite capabale of performing the role that was required of it. The distribution of the State forces that he tookover as its Commander-in-Chief was as under [85]:-

Kashmir	5648
Jammu	12730
Astor	1604
Gilgit	3116
Muzaffarabad	300
Various Forts	4595
Total	27993

Besides, the State army had 66 field and mountain guns and 222 fort guns. The death of Maharaja Ranbir Singh in 1885, however, coincided with the famous Panjdeh incident which brought the British on the brink of war with Russia. Although the incident passed off peacefully it brought home to the British the existence of a Russian threat to the Indian Empire and with it the importance of the Gilgit region in the defence of the country. The realisation was probably always there but Maharaja Ranbir Singh had proved to be a strong ruler and he had resisted repeated attempts of the

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85. As computed by Mr Henvy (Officer on Special Duty) at the end of 1882 (Gazetteer of Kashmir & Ladakh)

British towards gaining greater control over the State in general, and Gilgit in particular. It was not the British method to achieve their aim by use of the force so they had lain quite waiting to strike at an appropriate time. After the Panjdeh episode they could afford to wait no longer and they began working for more effective control over the region, using means more foul than fair. As a first step, two days after the death of his father, they made it known to the Maharaja Pratap Singh that the status of the Officer on Special Duty had henceforth been changed to that of the Political Resident. No sooner had that been done than the Resident started interfering in the day to day working of the State in the name of advice. No notice was taken of the Maharaja's protests and the British policy was ruthlessly pursued to the extent that in April 1889 the Maharaja was deposed, on a trumped up charge of conspiring with Russia.

The immediate step that the British took in the region itself was the sending of a military mission there in 1886 to assess its defence requirements. The Mission was led by Colonel (Later General) William Lockhart. The 'Tham' of Hunza who had been sore about the occupation of the Chaprot and Chalt forts by the combined forces of J&K and Nagar, now found his opportunity and he refused to allow Lock-heart to proceed unless he promised to restore these two forts to Hunza. Colonel Lockhart could not do that as it went against British interests. He however, induced the ruler of Nagar to withdraw from these forts his portion of the troops. Apparently this satisfied the Hunza chief and with the Dogras being made the sole occupants of these forts peace reigned over the area for some time. Even when Ghazan Khan the 'Tham' of Hunza was murdered by his son in the same year, there was no breach of peace as such and immediately after his accession, Safdar Ali, the new chief, made his submission to the Maharaja of

Kashmir. Peace was, however, broken for a short period in 1888 when Hunza and Nagar combined and succeeded in ejecting the Dogra garrisons from Chaprot and Chalt. The Dogras then counter attacked and reoccupied the forts by the end of the year and that was the end of the matter for the time being.[86]

THE THIRD BLACK MOUNTAIN EXPEDITION

While the British were establising themselves in the State, the murderous attack on Major Battye's party by the Black Mountain tribes in 1888 compelled them to plan an expedition (the third one now) to the region the same year. As a matter of fact since after the expedition of 1868 the tribals of the region had multiplied their offences to such an extent that the British had considered action against them as long over due. The new Maharaja of Kashmir was quick enough to offer two regiments under the command of General Inder Singh for the plannned expedition into the Black Mountains.[87]

The command of the expeditionary Force was given to Major General J W Mc Queen, CB, ADC. The Force considered of two brigades and a reserve column. General Inder Singh's two regiments formed part of the later. The operation commenced on 4th October 1888 when the two brigades entered the Black Mountains beyond Oghi. As per plan the reserve column remained around Oghi and in occupation of the Chattar Plain. The punitive action taken by the fighting column soon began to have its effect and the tribes began to submit one by one. In the last phase the reserve column was used for the subjugation of the Pariari, Saiyads and Trikriwal tribes further North. After complation of the task the whole force disparsed in November the same year.[88]

86. Memoranda on the Indian States 1932 p 83
87. History of the 5th Royal Gorkha Rifles (FF) pp 87-93
88. Ibid.

The exact tasks allotted to the J&K troops during the operations is not known but the offical report made through a letter from the Under Secretary Government of India Foreign Department to the Resident in Kashmir gives some details of their general conduct during the operations. The later portion of the letter reads thus :-

> "During the whole period since leaving Jammu the conduct of the contingent has been most exemplary. There has been an entire absence of crime either of a civil or military nature. The men have exhibited a patient and cheerful disposition under discomfort even when bivoking (bivouacking) in the open at Batgra gaon during rainy weather and in this the officers have shown an excellent example to their men. All ranks have evinced a desire to learn and rectify mistakes and have profited by any instructions imparted to them, in a remarkable degree".[89]

Even before this official communication was received Maharaja Partap Singh had received a personal latter from General Sir Fedrick Roberts, the Commander in Chief India, soon after the return of the J&K contigent to the State. It is evident from this letter that General Inder Singh's men had created a good impression on their British Commanders during their sojourn outside the State. The relevant portion of the letter dated 13th December 1888 is reproduced below :-

> "Although doubtless you will have reveived an official communication from the Government of India regarding the services of your Highness troops which accompanied the Black Mountain expedition, yet I feel sure you will permit me, as a personal friend, to tender my heartiest congratulations

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89. Jammu Archieves Mil Block E file 377-M-87

on the safe return of the contingent from Agror.

"From all quarters I have heard nothing but praise regarding the fine appearance of your Highness's troops and the soldier like spirit that prevails all ranks. I understand that they showed the keenest wish to assist operations in any way in their power and that their behaviour was exemplary.

"It must be great satisfaction to you, my dear Maharaja that your Highness' troops so worthily upheld the honour of the Kashmir army and I feel sure that the practical experience which the officers and men of the contingent have gained will be of much value to them, when they assist to adopt the reforms, which I am grateful to hear, your Highness proposes to carry out shortly with a certain portion of your troops....."[90]

The "proposed reforms" which General Roberts was gratified to hear about were in fact thrust on the Maharaja by the British themselves for furthering their interests and referred to the formation of the Imperial Service ~~Troops~~ Corps from among the forces of all the states in India. Never-the-less these reforms, which are dealt with in the next chapter, form an important landmark in the history of the development of the State force, in that they helped it to emerge from the ~~Medivial~~ medieval era to enter the modern.

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90. Ibid

CHAPTER III

THE IMPERIAL SERVICE TROOPS

For 20 years after the Mutiny the Governments in India and England were obsessed with the danger of a fresh rebellion. This attitude limited the role of the army in India to the preservation of internal security. The period after 1878 was, however, marked with considerable change in the political situation of India, which in turn had a deep impact on its military system. The principle event of this period was the Second Afghan War and the complete change in the political and military situation on the North West Frontier in the context of growing Russian activity across the Afghan border after the war. The improvement in the Russian forces on the northern frontiers of Afghanistan, indeed posed a serious threat to the security of India. The Panjdeh incident in 1885, in which the Russians had unnecessarily attacked an Afghan outposts, removed any doubts about the Russian intentions in the region, that some British Officials in India may have entertained. The threat was now too clear and British Indian geared itself to meet this threat. It was appreciated that in native imagination Russia had come to be regarded as the great rival of the British in the east and that the stability of the British rule in India could be threatened not so much by internal disorders as by the slightest reverse at the hands of the Russians. Consequently internal security was now relegated to a secondary place.[1]

This change in the situation brought about a definite change in the British policy in India. It was now felt necessary to abandon the policy of mistrust of the native army and to associate the Indians in the country's defence scheme. As such the proportion of the natives to the British in the Indian Army, as laid down by Peels Commission in 1859, now needed to be modified in favour of the natives. The recommendations of Peels Commission were not, however,

1. Dr. KML Saxena, Narrator, Historical Section, Ministry of Defence The Military System of India New Delhi 1974, pp 128-154

abandoned altogether and the limit to the raising of additional native regiments, though now relaxed, still remained.[2]

With the limit set to the size of the Indian Army and considering the fact that the Indian regiments were not equipped and trained to fight a modern war with a European enemy, it was apparent that the army in India could not, by itself, hold the field against Russia. Help from England was, therefore, made an important aspect of the scheme for the defence of India. As help from England was bound to take time in arriving, the role of the Indian Army, in context of the Russian threat was limited to ~~warding off an assault by Russia~~ keeping the Russians at bay during the period that would elapse before the resources of the Empire could be brought to the assistance of the Indian Government, and then forming, by virtue of its local experience and knowledge of the threater of war, a substantial and effective nucleaus on which reinforcements could be engrafted as and when they arrived. This was to be in addition to its original role of preserving the internal order in India itself and that of meeting any trouble that might arise on the border, whether from the frontier tribes or Afghanistan.[3]

For acquiring this capability Lord Dufferin set about to develop the defences of the Empire between 1885 and 1888. A large number of fortfications was constructed on the North West Frontier. Important beases were connected by rail and road communications with military out posts. Additions were made to the British and native forces in India. The former being raised by 11,000 and the later by about 17,000. In order to make the natives worthy of their Russian foe it was decided to arm them with the Martin Henri rifles. A mobile army reserve corps of 30,000 men that could move to any threatened area at the shortest notice was organised.[4]

Obviously the resources that the Indian Government was able

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2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. Ibid

to mobilised were not enough even for its limited objective. Russia was expected to concentrate 60,000 to 70,000 troops in the Herat Valley on the one side and the Oxus on the other. Besides she was in a position to reinforce her army to a great extent, with comparative ease. In order to further augment their resources, therefore, the British turned to the natives states. The states under the administration of the Indian princes maintained armed forces totalling to about 381,000 men and had among them as many as 2,698 serviceable guns. This strength was twice as large as the whole of the British and Indian Imperial Forces in India and had been a liability all this while in as much as it was one of the duties of the Imperial Army to watch and overawe the armies of these feudatory states. The British now sought to convert this liability into an asset.[5]

An official appraisal of the situation was made and it was felt that the states offered no danger of combination. In the first place there was the tradition of mutual rivalry and hostility among them and, in the second, they were for the most part widely separated. Their role in the Mutiny of 1857 generally had already relieved the British from apprehension of active hostility from the princely state. Consequently it was felt that these separate bodies, in fact, consituted an element of strength as they were less likely to combine for continued action against the British than the various regiments of the regular Indian Army.[6]

After being reassured on this point, the British decided to utilise the resources of the states for the defence of the country. The British treaties with the States had many varying conditions as regards military assistance to the Government of India. But these referred to conditions long since past. After 1885 the

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5. Ibid
6. Ibid

concept of modern liability of the states towards the British Indian Government was set forth before the Princes. As a master-piece of British diplomacy the Princes were turned, overnight, into allies and in this capacity "they were to feel as much interested as the Queen did in the guardianship of the frontiers, commercial interests, and the external renown of her Empire in the maintenance of the blessings of peace and of friendly relations with the powers that lie upon its borders or are nourished by its trade." They were naturally to join in defending these interest if and when they were attacked or threatened. This policy, took the form of asking the states which had material of serious military value to offer for preparing and equipping a portion of their armed forces, so as to take their place besides the British troops when required.[7]

Consequently in 1889 portions from the armies of the princely states were converted into what came to be known as the Imperial Service Troops. They were to be financed by the respective states and officered by State Commissioned Officers. Their training was, however, to be supervised by British Officers from the Regular Indian Army. These Officers were not to reside in the state to which they were ~~allotted~~ deputed except when required to do so in certain states like Kashmir which provided large contingents for Imperial Service. ~~to be known~~ They were to be designated as Inspecting Officers or Assistant Inspecting Officers. At the Government of India level was to be an Inspector General and the Inspecting Officers were, in fact, to form his staff. The Inspector General was not to come under Army Headquarters but he was required to keep in touch with it. The officers holding these posts were to be carefully selected from among those who were known for their manners and tact as well as military knowledge.[8]

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7. Ibid
8. Lt. Gen Sir George Mac Munn The Indian States and Princes London 1936, pp 179-184

While selecting the troops for Imperial Service care was taken that only the "real state troops" actuated by their loyality towards their prince were included and not the mercenary types (other than Gorkhas) which many states still continued to employ. The Imperial Service Troops were to be better fed, better equipped and better paid than the remaining troops of the state which were to be known as the "Regulars". The formation of the Imperial Service Troops and their favoured treatment was, therefore, bound to cause much heart burning among the "Regulars" and pose a big problem for all the States.[9] Another problem that was bound to arise was that pertaining to the financial aspect of the scheme. It was quite evident that in order to meet the great expense of maintaining a portions of their troops at the level of efficiency required for Imperial Service the financial strain on the states would be great. The financial problem was bound to be more acute in the case of Jammu and Kashmir State which, because of its particular circumstances was required to provide the largest contingent for Imperial Service. One way out would be a drastic cut in the strength of the "Regular troops" but that in itself would create an equally serious problem of rehabilitation of disbanded troops.

It appears that initially there was no intention on the part of the Government of India to use the Imperial Service Troops as an integral part of the regular formations of its army. It was felt that even with the best organisation that the British might give to the Imperial Service Troops they would not be able to take the field against a European enemy in a regular war and that at best they might be used for meeting or driving back detatched portions of the enemy on some subsidiary axis. The role that was allotted to the Imperial Service Troops was therefore limited to acting as anxiliaries only. Besides there were many other tasks for

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9. Ibid

which they could be utilised, tasks such as suppression of turbulent tribes and occupation of disaffected districts to free the Indian Army from such duties in event of a major war.[10]

The peculiarity of the Jammu and Kashmir State lay it its location on the outer frontier of India, while all the other states lay far within. Consequently the story of the J&K army was quite different from that of armies of other States. Besides having fought to extend India's borders to where they were at the time, they had engaged in hill warfare against the borders tribes continuously for well over 50 years which had kept them alert and ever ready for action. They had therefore not suffered the rot which forces of other states had suffered for want of a live frontier. This was to prove a great assest to the British in their endevours to establish their control over the Gilgit region. Now in the context of the Russian threat, the location of Jammu and Kashmir State gave it the strategic key to an entrance gateway to India. The Russians foiled in their advance in the Heart direction were now feeling the flanks with patrols that were trickling over the great passes that led to India through Kashmir. They had led parties to Chitral and towards Hunza and Nagar over the Dorah, Baroghil and Killik passes; which though not practical military routes, could be used as channels for runover and intrigue for destabilishing the frontier. The British, therefore, wanted that Kashmir's control over her distant tributaries be rather more definit Not only were the Russians infilteration routes to be blocked but also the trade routes passing through these regions had to be protect ed against Khanjuti robbers of Hunza. In short the J&K State was required to take on what was practically a permanent Imperial Service liability war or no war. Little wonder that the Kashmir Imperial

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10. Dr K M L Saxena pp 128-154

Service Corps had to be the largest body of troops as compared with that of any other princely state. The expenses of this large frontier army in their entirety were more than a fair charge on the Kashmir revenue.[11] But the British were not concerned with this aspect of the formation of the Imperial Service troops. Indeed their concern for the well being of the states ended where their interests began.

Formation of Kashmir Imperial Service Corps

The total strength of the J&K State Force on 31 December 1888 was 22,398 of which 2667 were artillery, 630 cavalry, 12,229 infantry and 6872 irregulars (both cavalry and infantry). This marked a reduction of 5000 troops since 1885, probably in preparation for the formation of the Imperial Service Corps. This strength of the army was further slashed to nearly half in 1889 and on the eve of the great event in March 1890 it stood at just 9,965 men of which the share of the artillery was 893, that of cavalry 501, of infantry 7283, and the remaining 1288 were the irregulars. The army at that time was organised into various arms and services as under :-[12]

(a) Artillery

(i) No I Mountain Battery (old Bijli and later No. 7)

(ii) No 2 Mountain Battery (old Body Guard Battery)

(iii) No 3 Mountain Battery

(iv) Three Garrison Batteries

(v) One Battery of Horse Artillery

(b) Cavalry

Two Regiments

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11. Lt Gen Sir George Mac Munn pp 185-186 and David Walker The Prince in India Bombay 1923 pp 212-213

12. J&K State Administrative Report 1889-90

(c) Infantry

Raghu Pratap

Body Guard

Raghunath

Narsing Rangole

Raghubir

Ratah Shivji

Suraj Gorkha

Ruder Shivnabh

Lachman Jagirdar

Sappers & Miners (Pioneers)

(d) Irregulars

Two regiments

(e) Forts

(f) Miscellaneous Units (Services)

Medical

Veterinary

Kahars (gun carriers)

Dolibearers (casulty evacuation)

Workshops

The actual work pertaining to the organisation of the Imperial Services Crops in the State started in 1889. It is not for us here to enter into any discussion of the controversial action of the British in divesting the Maharaja of his authority. Suffice it to say that Raja Ram Singh, the younger brother of Maharaja Partap Singh continued to act as the Commander-in-Chief of the State army, which appointment had been bestowed upon him by the later on becoming the Maharaja. The functions of the Maharaja were henceforth to be performed by the State Council that was constituted for the purpose with Raja Amar Singh (another brother of the Maharaja) as its president. The virtual diposition of the Maharaja in 1889 was

followed immediately by the creation of the British Political Agency in Gilgit which took over completely the responsibility for the defence and the internal administration of this strategic area.

Preliminaries having been completed in 1889, the Kashmir Imperial Service Corps actually took form in 1890. In April that year a brigade of selected men from all three arms was assembled at Jammu under the command of General Suram Chand, and placed at the disposal of the Government of India. Major Drummond and Captain Hogge who had supervised the organisation of the force were appointed as the Inspecting Officers. The force with a total strength of 2881 all ranks was composed of the following:-[13]

Two Squadrons Cavalry designated as the Kashmir Lancers
Two Mountain Batteries
The Raghu Pratap Battalion designated as the Ist Kashmir Infantry.
The Body Guard Battalion designated as the 2nd Kashmir Rifles
The Sappers and Miners designated as the 3rd Kashmir Infantry

General Suram Chand, as the Commander of the Brigade, was authorised one Brigade Major of Subedar rank, and one ADC who could be a Subedar or a Jamadar, as his staff officers. Each unit had a Commandant and an Assistant Commandant. There was a Colonel Artillery in charge of both the mountain batteries.

Each Infantry battalion was composed of 625 men organised in six companies. Class composition of the various battalions was now specifically laid down. While the Raghu Partap had four companies of Rajputs and two of Dogra Muslims, the Body Guard was allotted three companies of Hindus and three of the Muslims. The Sappers and Miners battalion which was composed of three companies of the Muslims, one of Mazhabis, one of Dooms and one of Meghs (all low castes) when it was a pioneer battalion, was now re-organised into a regular infantry battalion with all the six companies of Hindu Dogras.[14]

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13. Ibid
14. Ibid

The pay of a General of the Imperial Service Corps was fixed at Rs. 400/- per month as against Rs. 312/- received by the General of the 'Regular' army. The Commandant of the cavalry received Rs. 150/-, the Infantry Commandant Rs. 100/- and the Artillery Colonel Rs. 150/- per month. The Sowar of the cavalry received Rs. 24/- while a sepoy's pay was fixed at Rs. 7/-. In comparison the pays in the 'Regular' army were woefully low. For instance the Commandant received only Rs. 62 annas 8, and a sepoy continued to be paid Rs. 5/- annas 10 which was just a little more than what he received during Maharaja Gulab Singh's time.[15] The heart burning, was there as expected but because of the characteristic Dogra discipline, the feelings remained supressed by and large. Raja Ram Singh the Commander-in-Chief, however, remained alive to the condition of the 'Regular' army and all possible remedial measures were taken from time to time.

The initial expenditure on equipping this Brigade amounted to Rs. 36,847/- in 1889, but Rs, 1,15,000/- had to be earmarked for the purpose in the next financial year.

No sooner had the Imperial Service Corps been formed than its training was started. Two drill instructors for the cavalry were obtained from 14 Bengal Lancers while 7 officers, NCOs and men were attached to that unit at Sialkot for training in drill and Musketry. Hav Major Khudabuksh of No: 4 Hazara Mountain Battery was appointed Instructor for the training of the gunners. At the end of the training year proper target practice was carried out with the 7 pounder bronze Howitzers which had been presented to the State by the British way back in 1877. Drill instructors for the Infantry were loaned by the 37th Dogra, 32nd Pioneers and 4th Gorkha. As in the case of cavalry 18 officers

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15. Ibid

of the Infantry were sent on attachment to the regiments of the Bengal army for attending various courses of instructions.[16]

As has been noted before, the Kashmir Imperial Service Corps was required to take on a permanent British liability along the Gilgit frontier. This entailed continuous employment of one Brigade in the Gilgit region. Obviously one Brigade was not enough for this task if relief of units serving in Gilgit was to be arranged for. The requirement for another brigade in the Imperial Service Corps (ISC) had indeed been foreseen and the next phase of ISC organisation was started as soon as the first one had been completed. In this phase two Garrison batteries and three infantry battalionswere transferred from the Regular army to the ISC; the work on the reorganisation and re-equipping of which had been started in 1890 itself. The three new battalions that joined the ISC were the Raghunath now designated as the 4th Kashmir Rifles, the Ramgole designated as the 5th Kashmir Light Infantry and the Raghubir battalion designated as the 6th Kashmir Infantry. The class composition fixed for the 4th battalion was 3 companies of the Hindu Dogras, 3 of Gorkhas, while the 5th Battalion was constituted of 2 companies of Hindu Dogras, 2 of Gorkhas and 2 companies of Muslims Dogra. The 6th battalion which joined the ISC last of all on 01 Jan 1892 had the same class composition as the 5th battalion. The British took on the responsibility for the recruitment of the Gorkhas for the ISC wef 1891. As regards the arms, the 4th battalion carried the short Snider rifle which was issued to it in 1889 while the 5th and 6th continued to be in possession of the long Snider rifles which were

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16. ibid

presented by the British in 1877. The training of these battalions was carried out by the instructors loaned from 37 Dogra, 1/1 Gorkha, 2/1 Gorkha, 2/5 Gorkha and 24th Punjab Infantry of the Indian Army.[17]

Even as the second brigade was being formed, the first which was designated as the Gilgit Brigade had moved to Gilgit and had started functioning by the end of 1890. Commanded by General Suram Chand it then consisted of the Ist Infantry (Raghu Pratap), 2nd Rifles (Body Guard), Ist Mountain battery and one Garrison battery. Its infantry element was completed in the summer of 1891 when the 3rd Infantry (Pioneers) joined the brigade. The 2nd Brigade known as the Jammu Brigade became functional under General Baj Singh by the middle of 1891. It was then composed of the 4th Infantry (Raghunath), the 5th Light (Ramgole), the 6th Infantry (Raghubir), 2nd J&K Mountain Battery and two Garrison batteries, and as its name suggests was located at Jammu. Two bands were raised and one each was attached to the ISC Brigades. The full dress of the two Rifles battalions, the 2nd and the 4th was to be green and their accountrement black as against Red dress and brown accountrement of the other battalions.[18]

The cavalry regiment of the ISC was located at Jammu. It was commanded by ~~Lt Col~~ Lieut Colonel Aladad Khan and received training under the guidance of Major Drummond the Inspecting Officer and instructors from the 14th Lancers. The unit was issued with Sinder carbines. It was, it appears, composed mostly of 'Mians' (High class Rajputs) who were described by Major Drummond in his annual report, as the best fighting class.[19]

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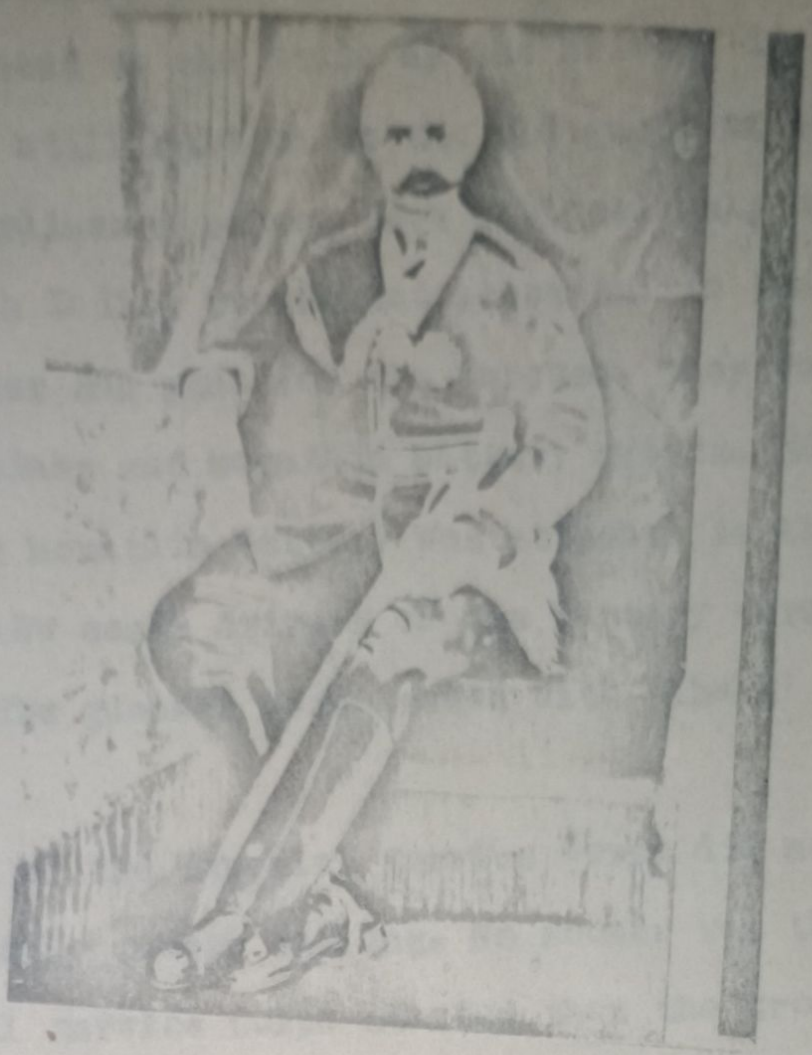
17. J&K State Administrative Report 1890-91

18. Ibid

19. Ibid



While the Ist Battery at Gilgit was equipped with the new 7 pounder guns presented to the State by the British in 1877, the 2nd Battery at Jammu still held on to the old guns of local manufacture. These ordinance pieces were replaced only in November 1891 when the British Indian Government presented to the state another four 7 pounder RML guns for the purpose. They were also now issued with carbines and mountain battery swords. Hav Pahalwan Khan of No: 2 Derjat Mountain Battery was attached to the Battery as instructor. The low caste drivers of the battery were replaced with Mohammadans. The gunners were issued with 'Khaki' drill uniforms[20]

The formation of the Imperial Service Corps did not however, have a totally smooth sailing. No sooner was the organisation of the Imperial Service Corps started than the troops started deserting in large numbers. Within a year of its formation over 550 men had deserted from the ISC and more than twice that number from the Regular army during the same period. Of these 295 of the ISC and 946 of the Regular army were apprehended and punished to set an example for others. As didficulty of capturing a deserter once he had taken to the hills was experienced regular army patrols were sent in aid to the civil authority for apprehension of the deserters. The British explained these desertions as being due to the "entire absence of discipline"[21] in former times and to the difficult life the soldier was required to lead in view of the operational commitments in Gilgit. It would, however, appears incorrect to say that there was no discipline in the State army before the British took over. This British surmise is belied by the splendid war record of the State force which could not have been unknown to the British. In fact reports by their own officers who

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20. Ibid

21. Ibid

came in contact with the state troops during Maharaja Gulab Singh and Maharaja Ranbir Singh's periods speak high of their discipline. It would perhaps be more appropriate to say that concept of discipline as enforced by the British and as understood by the Dogras, before the advent of British rule, were different. The Dogra concept of discipline was borne out of a sense of self respect and pride in the cause. That discipline did not affect a soldiers individuality nor crush his initiative. He did what he was required to do willingly and with a sense of purpose. Little wonder that just at the beat of the drum the Dogra volunteers collected in thousands in service of their Ruler. No questions were asked and they followed their leaders wheresever they would lead them to. Accepting meagre pays (that ran in arrears most of the time) and with no other motive other than enhancement of Dogra glory, they faced bitter cold, starvation and death at the world's highest battle grounds without demurring in the least. There was practically no crime and never any case of plundering. Surely all this could not lead one to believe that there was total absence of discipline in those days.

Under the British concept the soldier lost his identity and he was treated with disrespect as a necessary aspect of training (Imagine the abuses that the drill instructors must have hurled on him). All in all he was made to feel inferior and stupid under the new environment. Besides he must have felt insecure. His officers had been sidelined and the command virtually taken over by the British Inspecting Officers who could not have been as sympathetic towards him as his own officers used to be. The human touch was gone as every thing worked like a machine under rules and regulations. Besides, the change had been too sudden for him to bear. Lastly he had lost his motivation. The Mahraja was not there even as a symbol and the soldier now felt like a mercenary serving an alien cause.

Reorganisation of the Regular Army

While

Reorganisation of the Regular Army

While the Imperial Service Corps was being formed the rest of the army was also reorganised. The Military Department which came directly under the Commander-in-Chief was reorganised to function under the major heads of (a) the Army (b) Arsenals (c) Forts and (d) Military Workshops. The Army was sub divided into the Imperial Service Corps, the Regular Army and the Irregular troops. With effect from 01 January 1890 the services of Lt Col Neville Chamberlain of Central India Horse were requisitioned by the State to assist the Commander-in-Chief in the Military administration. He was designated as the Military Secretary. Appointment of the Chief of the Staff in the rank of Colonel was also created which was filled by Colonel Manohar Singh. Thereafter the C-In-C's office was reorganised into (a) Chief of the Staff's office (b) Adjutant General's office (c) Quarter Master General's office (d) Accountant General's office and (e) the Military Secretary's office. The posts of the Adjutant General, Quarter Master General and the Accountant General were filled by Colonel Dina Nath, Colonel Devi Din and Mr Durga Prasad respectively. Lieut Colonel H Melliss was appointed the Chief Inspecting Officer.[22]

The Lachman Jagirdar Battalion was disbanded in 1890 while the strength of the Irregular regiments was reduced from 345 each to 300 each. The services of the Jagirdars of Machipura who formerly supplied a contingent for frontier services were dispensed with under the new scheme, while the Jagirdar Gorcharas and Mian Sowars were transferred to the civil.[23]

The Sappers and Miners created out of the three companies of low castes rendered surplus, after the class composition of 3rd Kashmir Infantry was revised, received the Government's special attention after they had proved their usefulness in Gilgit. They

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22. Administrative Report 1889-90

23. Ibid

were now formed into two units of Sappers and Minners consisting of two companies each. One was located at Gilgit and the other at Jammu; relieving each other biannually. Their pays were also increased to bring them at par with the troops of the Regular army.[24]

After the separation of the Imperial Service Troops the regular army was organised into two brigades, one under General Punjab Singh at Jammu and the other under General Shanker Singh at Srinagar. The artillery in the 'Regular' army suffered a cut in 1891 when the 3rd mountain battery was disbanded. It was now left with one battery of Horse Artillery which was located at Jammu to fire salutes at ceremonials and one garrison battery located at Srinagar which also provided detatchments for Ladakh, Skardu, Dras and Muzaffarabad. The infantry element (after the disbandment of Lachman Jagirdar in 1890) that remained in the Regular army consisted of three infantry battalions. The Fatch Shivji designated as the 7th Kashmir Infantry returned to Jammu after being relieved by the ISC troops at Gilgit and formed part of the Regular Brigade at Jammu while the Suraj Gorkha designated as the 8th Kashmir Infantry and Ruder Shivnabh now designated as the 9th Kashmir Infantry formed part of the Regular Brigade at Srinagar. The Ladakh garrison of one company was provided by the battalions of the Srinagar Brigade by turns. The two irregular regiments took turns providing a garrison for Skardu. The Sappers and Miners under Commandant Gokul, although borne on the strength of the Regular army were, in fact, employed by the ISC on construction of roads in Gilgit. The forts men also formed part of the Regular army. Besides, the 'Regular' army had its own band (brass) and medical department. What remained of the Kashmir Body Guard Cavalry after separation of the Kashmir Lancers was commanded by Commandant Nawab Khan and it also formed part of the Jammu 'Regular' Brigade.[25]

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24. Ibid
25. Administrative Report 1890-91

The limit of command between the GOC Srinagar and GOC Gilgit on the Bandipore-Gilgit road was fixed at Kamri. The Burzil passes and Skaurdu were included in the Gilgit Command in 1891.[26]

The total strength of the State army after the creation of the Imperial Service Corps and the reorganisation of the regular army stood at 8955 of which 4904 were Imperial Services Troops.[27] Aparently some 13000 men or more had to be discharged in the process. This had been necessiated so as not to allow the military budget to exceed the rupees 12 lakh that mark had been fixed by the authorities.[28] As anticipated the rehabilitation of such a large number of men presented a big problem to the Commander-in-Chief whose sympathies decidly lay with the demobilised personnel. Besides the human aspect there was also the danger of causing disaffection among the troops; even if they be the docile Dogras. Steps taken to reduce the impact of the change by making it as gradual as possible under the circumstances were as under :-[29]

a) A supernumerary list was prepared and all the officers and other rank rendered surplus were immediately taken on it. Thereafter they were brought on half pay without having to render any service, but their service liability was retained.

b) Those who could be retired due to old age and on medical grounds were retired compulsarily.

c) The rest were offered gratuity for seeking premature retirement. Much to the relief of the State authorities some 58 officers and over 2000 other ranks immediately opted for gratuity.

d) Those that still remained on the supernumerary list were then gradually absorbed as and when vacancies arose either in the

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26. Administrative Report 1891-92
27. Administrative Report 1890-91
28. Administrative Report 1891-92
29. Administrative Report 1889-90 and 1890-91

ISC or the Regular army due to retirements, deaths, desertions etc. A reserve battalion was created from among those on the supernumerary lists, for guard duties at Jails and treasury and other multifarious duties such as those connected with the collection of revenue, which were hitherto being performed by units of the 'Regular' army. To reduce the military budget this battalion was to be paid from the civil list.

By the beginning of 1891 all cases of personnel under reduction were settled one way or the other. Much of the credit for the smooth change over went to the State forces officers who exercised great control over the men and took pains to explain to them the inevitability of the situation. The problem was indeed handled by Raja Ram Singh most aptly and sympathetically and this fact was duly acknowledged by the British authorities. Other names that came up for special mention in this regard were those of General Raj Singh of the ISC and General Punjab Singh of 'Regular' army.[30]

HUNZA-NAGAR CAMPAIGN- 1891[31]

In order to use the Gilgit Brigade of the ISC effectively in service of Imperial interests, the Gilgit Agency was revived in 1889. Captain A G Durand who was appointed the Political Agent of Gilgit was promoted to the rank of a Lieut Colonel and in addition to his duties as the Political Agent was appointed the Inspecting Officer of the ISC at Gilgit. By virtue of this he became the de facto Commander (at least operationally) of the Imperial Service Troops stationed in the Agency and as soon as the Gilgit Brigade had settled down Colonel Durand planned an expedition to Hunza and Nagar in early 1891. The objectof the expedition was to disperse the gathering of Hunza and Nagar tribesmen who were threatening the fort of

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30. Ibid
31. Based primarily on information contained in Gazette of India dated April 30, 1892 pp 209-215 supp. by E F Knight in Where Three Empires Meet London 1895.

Chalt (which was under the occupation of Kashmir troops) and the road from Gilgit to Chalt. It was also intended to generally bring under control the Hunza and Nagar Chiefs who had broken their engagements with the British made in 1889, when they had submitted to the British Agent during his visit to the two principalities. For this expedition Colonel Durand had requisitioned British Indian troops to supplement the Kashmir ISC. But while he waited for the arrival of troops from India there was an immediate requirement of meeting the threat to Chalt and Chaprot and also of improving the road Nomal- Chalt - Chaprot to facilitate movement of troops and guns during the impending operations. Consequently Colonel Durand decided to move to Chalt with 2 guns of the Ist Kashmir Mountain Battary and 200 men of the Body Guard even before the arrival of the Indian troops. General Suram Chand also decided to accompany the force, small though it was.

The move commenced at 1500 hours on 27th May 1891 when the infantry began to cross the rope bridge over the river. The gunners had to make a raft to take the guns across while the mules swam over to the other bank, inspite of the swollen state of the river due to melting of the snow. As upto Nomal there was no chance of interference by the enemy, the infantry and the guns advanced independently of each other. On reaching Nomal it was found that no hostile move had been made on Chalt and as the guns had still not arrived Durand decided to push on to Chalt next morning with only 50 men of the Body Guard. ~~reaching there~~. Although the distance between Nomal and Chalt was only 12 miles it took the little force 12 hours to cover it, because of the bad state of the track. The track was, however, considered fit for the mules to move on it with their guns, even if with difficulty, and consequently the guns were ordered to move to Chalt the next day. An escort and a working party to help carry the loads of the battery where they could not be carried on the mules

was provided by the men of the Raghu Partap located at Nomal. This march was an exceedingly severe one which taxed the men heavily, as it took 15 hours to cover a distance of some 9 miles. The following day the guns had to be taken across the Chaicher Pari; a cliff face over which the existing road consisted of a dangerous rock staircase for half a mile and of a narrow track which was at places not more than a foot wide. After several hours of hard work the guns of the battery were transferred across this stretch without accident. The mules were then made to swim across the river to the left bank and then back to its right bank with men of the Raghu Partap assisting. A Havildar nearly lost his life as he got swept away into a rapid. He was saved by a companion at the imminent risk of his own life. The Battery ultimately reached Chalt on 31st May.

Commandant Gokal and his 150 Sappers and Miners were at that time working at Hathu Pir. They were sent for telegraphically and put on the road from Nomal to Chalt as soon as they arrived; taking on the Chaisher Pari stretch first. The men under Commandant Gokal worked round the clock and during the fortnight the troops were at Chalt, they had made a passable road between Nomal and Chalt. The road was of course a make shift one but it was well constructed, considering the time taken and the difficult nature of the ground and Commandant Gokal and his men were greatly commended for this work. Unfortunatelly two Sappers were killed when they fell over a precipice while engaged in the construction of the road.

At Chalt there was much work for the men of the Body Guard but the Gorkhas worked with a will at whatever they were sent to do. They helped to rebuild the Chalt fort and to destroy the one built by the villagers opposite to it. They even built half a mile of road from Chalt to Chaprot, and all this while they were having to do the usual rounds of convoy duty, patrolling and manning out-posts.

The Nomal garrison was not having an easy time either. 150 men were drawn from the garrison and posted on the road between Nomal and Chalt. They formed a covering party for the Sappers and Miners working on the road, escorted convoys, guarded the rope bridges and performed other duties on this line of communication. The garrison Commander, Commandant Inder Singh of the Garrison Battary, was responsible for all the work connected with the forwarding of the daily convoys, grinding of grain for the troops, collection and despatch of coolies and procurement of timber required for repairing the road and sending it forward where required. Major Mangal Singh of the Raghu Pratap, the other senior officer at Nomal, was responsible for the construction of the wooden bridges over the stream which runs into the main river below the Nomal fort. The despatch of rations was greatly facilitated after this bridge was constructed.

Colonel Durand in his despatch to the Resident in Kashmir dated 30th June, had made a special reference to the "Cheery spirit with which the men and officers faced their work" and to the "ready cooperation which the British officers received on all occasions from their Kashmiri brothers in arms".

200 men of the 1/5 Gorkha Rifles and 2 guns of the No: 4 Haunza Mountain Battery that had been requisitioned by the British Agent for the proposed Haunza-Nagar expedition arrived at Gilgit via Kashmir in November 1891. All assistance was provided by the Kashmir army to facilitate speedy movement of the force. From Gilgit the force moved straight to Chalt where the Hunza-Nagar field force was being embodied. The embodiment was completed by 30th November 1891 when the force took the following form :-

Section of No: 4 Hazara Mountain Battery
One Gun Ist Kashmir Mountain Battery
200 men of the 1/5 Gorkha Rifles
28 men of the 20th (Punjab) Bengal Infantry
377 men of the Ist Kashmir Infantry (Raghu Pratap)
484 men of 2nd Kashmir Rifles (Body Guard)
159 men of the Punial Levy

The force that actually crossed the Hunza river and entered Nagar territory on Ist December, however, consisted of, besides all the others, only 257 men of the Raghu Pratap and 404 men of the Body Guard. Lieut C V F Townshend, the Inspecting Officer, Lieut F Duncan 23 Bengal Infahtry, Lieut C S Williams 43 Bengal Infantry and Lieut G D Widdicombe 9 Bengal Infantry were attached with the Raghu Pratap while Lieut J M D Baird 24 Bengal Infantry, the Inspecting Officer, Lieut F H Taylor 3rd Sikh Infantry and Lieut J Manners Smith were attached to the Body Guard Battalion.

On 2nd December the force advanced and captured the Nilt fort, the first in the Nagar territory. The fort was one of great strength located as it was at the junction of two precipitous cliffs several hundred feet high. The walls of the fort were of solid stone cemented by mud and strengthened by large timbers. The attack had to be delivered straight to the front over a space narrowing to a width of about 60 yards. A detatchment of the 1/5 Gorkahs led the assault after the main gate had been blown open by Captain Aylmer of the Royal Engineers. They were followed by the Kashmir Imperial Service troops. The guns though admirably served could make no impression on the walls nor affect the defenders who were well sheltered. The fort was, however, captured by the assaulting troops after suffering six killed and twenty five wounded. The enemy had suffered about 80 killed. Colonel Durand was among the wounded and had to be evacuated. He was succeeded by Captin Bradshaw.

As any move forward that day was considered impossible, due to the paths along the precipitous sides of the ravine having been destroyed by the enemy after his withdrawal, the force halted for the night at Nilt. In front of it was a great ravine running from the river bed to the glacier some thousands of feet above. The far bank was lined with 'Sangars' which dominated every possible

track up the bank. The height of the bank varied from 600 ft to 1200 ft and it was absolutely precipitous. To the left of the fort ran the Hunza river, on the opposite bank of which was the strongly fortified fort of Mayum, standing on the high cliff of the river and occupied by hundreds of men. Half a mile up the river on the left bank was a strongly fortified 'Ziarat' From the 'Ziarat' to the junction of the great ravine ran one continuous line of 'Sangars' During the night all these 'Sangar' were reinforced, and those exposed to shell fire were provided with such overhead protection as to defy the 7 pounders. On own side of the ravine the edge was held by a line of picquets upto the snow line; the Punial levy holding the upper positions.

On the morning of 3rd December an advance was attempted but after suffering a loss of one man killed and seven wounded the attempt was abondoned. The situation was now a difficult one. The force was very small and before it, was an enemy many times more numerous than itself, heavily entrenched and holding a position of great natural strength. To attack the lower 'Sangar' (held by some 100 men) which barred the way with any chance of success appeared imposible while an advance up the river bed against the fortified 'Ziarat' position under a raking cross fire from both the banks of the river, though feasible, would have led to very heavy loss, which the force could least afford to bear. The situation was not only difficult but appeared quite hopeless.

For seventeen days the force remained halted at Nilt not knowing what to do. An attempt to storm Mayum had been made on 12 December but the night operation offered such difficulties that the attempt was given up half way. The only course open was an attack on the 'Sangars' on the opposite bank of the ravine but how was one to reach these positions. Night after night a few

ENEMY POSITIONS OPPOSITE NILT FORT

VIEW OF NILT RAVINE FROM MAIUN

LOOKING SOUTH.

(Taken from Vol. I. Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India.)

men of the Body Guard who valunteered for this dangerous task, explored the precipice for a practical route up it but without result. The task of reconnaissance was a difficult one, for, the least noise drew heavy fire from the enemy and what was more, avalunches of rock started by the holders of the 'Sangars' thundered down the cliff at the slightest suspicion of movement up it. The Body Guard volunteers led by a Dogra Sepoy Nagda did not, however, give up. Nagda was somehow convinced that an assault up the cliffs on to the 'Sangars' was possible. To avoid detection by the enemy, Nagda started going out alone on these reconnaissance missions. After many nights of patient searching, Nagda, whose bravery and preseverence came up for special mention in the despatch of the force commander, at last found a route along which the assault could be made. Bradshaw had by this time left for Gilgit to discuss supply matters with Col Durand and in his absence the command had temporarily devolved on Captain Colin J Mackenzie of the Seaforthy Highlanders. Capt Mackenzie accepted Nagdas's plan and an attack was decided upon.

During the night of 19 December a hundred men of the Body Guard accompanied by Lieutenants J Manners Smith and F H Taylor were moved silently into the ravine. This movement under the cover of darkness was performed so silently that the enemy remained unaware of its having taken place. The party had taken with them their great coats and blankets and remained in the ravine all night. Their position was such that even when day light broke they remained effectively concealed from the enemy's view. Of this detatchment 50 riflemen under the command of Subedar Man Singh and led by Lieutenant Smith were to form the assault group while the remaining 50 riflemen under Lieutenant Taylor were to form the support group. The enemy position that was selected for attack was perched on the summit of a precipitous rock on their left, which

without a break descended some 1500 ft to the water in the ravine. Of the rest of the force in the Nilt area, 20 selected marksmen of the Bengal infantry, 50 of the 1/5 Gorkha rifles, 30 of the Raghu Pratap and 30 of the Body Guard took up positions on own side of the ravine facing the 'Sangars' before first light on 20th December, as suggested by Nagda, to prevent the enemy from knowing what the was happening down the cliff. The guns were also in position by that time. The loopholes of the Nilt fort were lined by the remaining troops; the dispositions being generally such as to prevent the enemy retiring from or reinforcing any particular 'Sangar' after the attack went in. It was considered necessary to keep all movements on own side as secret as possible, so as not to give to the enemy any indication of the attack that was coming on him.

At 0755 hours on 20th December, fire was opened on the 'Sangars' by the marksmen as Lieutenant Smith and Subedar Man Singh began moving up the cliff. Unfortunately, however, the Body Guards missed the route that had been reconnoitered by Nagda and got on to a route quite impossible of negotiating. Consequently after having ascended the precipice about half way, they had to return to where they had started to make a fresh attempt. The ascent was then recommenced at 1000 hours with Nagda making sure that the right line was followed this time. Foot by foot, yard by yard, the perilous ascent was made and the summit was eventually reached at 1130 Hrs. The presence of the storming party was detected by the enemy only when it had reached within 20 yards on his positions. There was then no stopping the Body Guards as they rushed the first 'Sangar' with Nagda, whose plan had brought them upto it, taking a prominent part in the assault. The Kunjites offered a determined resistance but under an assault which was even more determined, they finally gave way. MeanWhile Lieutenant Taylor with the remaining 50 men of the Body Guard also reached the summit and the two parties together

State troops with a prisoner at Nilt

Sepoy Nagla (left) with a Gorkha comrade

attacked and cleared all the other 'Sangars' one by one. The enemy flank had thus been turned and it was impossible for him to hold on to any of his other positions. The garrisons of the 'Ziarat' and the Mayum fort now streamed out of those places in full flight. Their numbers at these places were estimated at 100 and 400 respectively. Owing to the distance from the Nilt fort the enemy was able to effect his withdrawal without much loss.

At 1320 hours that day the force at the camp was formed up and a general advance with Raghu Pratap leading, was ordered. The route of the advance led through a large 'Sangar' from which 92 prisoners were taken. These prisoners alongwith 26 others were sent back to Chalt under escort. The Raghu Pratap then advanced on the Thol fort, sending out left flanking parties towards the 'Ziarat' and the Sangars near it. These were taken at the point of bayonet after 22 of the enemy were killed. Thol was occupied without any difficulty and then picquets were established at important points around it. In the meantime the Punial Levy had occupied Mayum and then advanced on Hini. Defences at both the forts were destroyed to make them un-serviceable for fighting.

While the Raghu Prataps and the Punialis secured the flanks, the advance was continued with 5th Gorkha Rifles in the lead. The Gorkhas occupied Gulmit and leaving a small guard there pushed on to Pisan which they reached at dusk. The force had thus advanced seven miles from Nilt. The guns joined the force at Pisan, reaching there at three in the morning of 21st December. Ample supplies of atta and meat were procured from inside the Pisan fort and full rations were served to the troops after a long time. It was thus a happy ending to the days action. The Hunza-Nagar field force had suffered just two casualties in two sepoys of the Body Guard wounded while it had inflicted a loss of 100 killed and 118 taken prisoners on the enemy. The enemy wounded could not be estimated as all had been carried away ~~all of them~~.

The advance was resumed at first light on 21st December. The force now consisted of 100 men of the 5th Gorkha Rifles, 250 of the Body Guard and two guns of No: 4 Hazara Mountain Battery. As the force advanced a few miles towards Nagar, a letter was received from Jafr Ali Khan, the Thamy of Nagar, making his submission to the Political Agent (Surgeon Major G S Robertson) who was accompanying the force. The Tham then made his submission personally at Pike where he was waiting to receive Major Robertson. Nagar (estimated to be 21 miles from Pisan) was eventually reached at 1800 hours that day. Hunza was occupied the next day without opposition while its Tham Safdar Ali and Uzar Khan fled at the sight of the Imperial troops. All resistance having ceased active operations were terminated on 22nd December 1891. The direction of affairs, thereafter, passed on to Major Robertson, the Chief Political Officer acting on behalf of Colonel Durand.

It was known that Safdar Ali and Uzar Khan, who were accompanied in their flight by 400 armed men, had carried with them not only the treasures of Hunza but also all the best rifles and that they were heading for the Killiki pass at the head of the Hunza valley, with the intention of crossing over to Tashkurghan in Chinese Turkistan. It was, therefore, considered necessary that the run away princes be captured and prevented from causing further trouble later on. In view of this a flying column was organised to give chase to the fugitives, at least as far as Misgar, some six marches up the valley.

Consequently on the morning of 25th December a party of 100 men of the Body Guard under Lieutenants Baird and Malony, and accompanied by Captain Manners Smith as the Political Officer, set out for the foot of the Killik pass with the object of overtaking the Tham's party. Even if that was not possible (the Tham having already taken a lead of three days or more) the party could study

the road and make the military presence of the British felt in the remote areas, which it would have to visit in the process.

Gircha was reached on the 29th but the lead taken by the Tham was such that at every stage of the marsh, the column appeared to have missed him by a few days. On 30th December while the main column stayed behind at Girdha the three British officers (and Mr E F Knight) with an escort of 25 men of the Body Guard set off for Misgar, one of the entrances to the BritishEmpire, and the last objective of the column. As expected the Knights had already escaped across the Pass when the party reached Misgar and the party returned to Gircha the same day. Thereafter the column set out on its return journey to Hunza on 2 January 1892, and reached there after 6 days arduous march, entailing scaling 'Paris' clambering over glaciers and marching through streams.

Meanwhile the Hunza-Nagar field force had left for Gilgit on 7 January after leaving behind 600 men of the Raghu Pratap, Body Guard, and 3rd Kashmir Infantry (50 men) to occupy Hunza and Nagar with Lieutenant Townshend as the Governor. It carried with it the big gun of the Hunza Castle as a trophy for the Gilgit Agency.

In his despatch to the Adjutant General India, giving an account of the campaign, Col Durand greatly commended the work of the Body Guard and the Raghu Partap. The relevant portion of his report reads as follows :-

> "As the officer to whom has fallen the honour of Commanding a body of the Imperial Service Troops on the first occasion on which they have been called upon to fight in the interest of the Empire, side by side with our own troops, it is with pride and pleasure that I would wish to drew the attention of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to the conduct of the Body Guard and the Raghu Partap Regiments".
>
> "I have had these Regiments under my orders for two years and

have seen them grow in efficiency under the careful instruction of Captain Twigg and Lieutenant Townshend and the steady efforts of some of their own officers. The result has been most satisfying and they have proved themselves fit to take their place in line with own regiments in frontier warfare. "They have shown coolness under fire and discipline in camp. The attack by the detachment of the Body Guard Regiment on the Sangar crowning the side of the ravine was a task to try the best regiment; and if Raghu Partab (Raghu Pratap) Regiment had not the opportunity of showing such high qualities, yet they showed no lack of keenness when they had a chance of meeting the enemy".

The officers of the ISC who came up for special mention in this report were (a) General Suram Chand, GOC Gilgit Brigade; (b) Major Makhan of the Body Guard, Commandant at Nomal who performed incessant work in connection with the passage of stores to the front and carried it out satisfactorily; (c) Subedar Gulabu and Jamadar Krishen Singh of the Raghu Partap who were highly commended for showing outstanding activity and efficiency in carrying out orders; (d) Adjutant Nain Singh of the Body Guard who in the frequent absence of the Commanding Officer (owing to his indisposition) practically commanded the Regiment in a most efficient manner; and (e) Subedar Man Singh of the Body Guard who commanded the 50 men in the assault led by Lieutenant Smith on 20th December and was also reported to have been frequently selected to command parties where courage and steadiness were likely to be required.

Among the other ranks one person whose name came to be prominently mentioned not only in Captain Mackenzie's and Col Durands reports but also in the report of the Adjutant General to the Secretary Military Department on behalf of the C-in-C India was that of Nagda. He, in fact, has been acknowledged in this report as the hero responsible for leading the Hunza-Nagar field force out of the impossible

situation which it had found itself in, beyond the Nilt fort. Unfortunately, however, his work received little recognition in terms of the military awards. He was awarded the Order of Merit 3rd class just like the other eight of his Battalion. Probably a victim of British policy.

The casualties suffered by the Ist Kashmir Infantry during the operations on 2nd December were one killed (Sepoy Ganga Ram) and two mortally wounded (Sepoys Tega Singh and Chabilal) and one wounded (Havildar Kara Singh). The 2nd Kashmir Rifles suffered just two wounded (Sepoys Harku Negi and Karan Bhadhur) in the fighting on the 20th of December.

A bronze medal badge was issued by the State Government to troops who took part in the Hunza-Nagar campaign. It may be mentioned here as a point of interest that Hunza and Nagar were officially plundered by the Hunza-Nagar Field Force, under directions of British officers and the sale proceeds of such goods were distributed among the other ranks of the Force as well as the troops that had stayed back at Gilgit, each getting one rupee, eleven annas and two pies. Probably only properties of some selected people were looted.

The following personnel of the ISC received honours and awards as shown against each for gallantry displayed during the operations :-

Sepoy Nagda	2 K R Order of Merit cl III
Sepoy Bhagat Bir Thappa	-do-
Sepoy Murki Negi	-do-
Sepoy Zorbir Thappa	-do-
Sepoy Lal Singh Gurung	-do-
Sepoy Munbir Thappa	-do-
Sepoy Narsingh Chhatri	-do-
Sepoy Randhaj Gurdag	-do-
Sepoy Sandar Khatri	-do-

Subedar Nathu	2 K R awarded Khilat by the State valued at Rs. 150/-
Subedar Ghan Singh	2 K R awarded Khilat by the State valued at Rs. 75/-

The Hunza-Nagar compaign was the first operation that the J&K troops had fought after they had been formed into the Imperial Service Corps. The campaign had, in fact, put to test the Imperial Service experiment and the British Government had every reason to feel gratified at its success. Not that there could have been any doubt regarding the fighting qualities of the J&K troops. They had too long a history of successful hill warfare against the tribes in these regions to leave any such doubt in any one's mind. But the cause for which they fought then and now was different. Although the British had with their tact and diplomacy made Imperial Service synonomous to service to the Ruler, there must have still lurked some anxiety in their minds as to the outcome of the experiment. This anxiety was now laid to rest for ever. But what must have relieved the British most was the successful functioning of a rather anomolous system of command under which the Imperial Service troops were employed in the field. There were in the force State officers of high rank who in action were practically superceded by the British officers, generally subalterns attached to the IS battalions, who actually led the men. The system was on its first trial and it worked without a hitch. In fact it worked so well that it became a precedence for all the future operations right upto World War II. This system besides being humiliating to the State officers, deprived the State force of much of the credit for their work in the field. The story of how this system was challanged by an officer of the State force during World War II and how he got the system changed is very interesting but that will be narrated at its proper place in Chapter VII.

Soon after the end of the Hunza-Nagar campaign the relief programme for the troops in Gilgit, the first since the formation of the ISC, was set into motion. By the end of 1892 the 2nd Mountain Battery had replaced the Ist while the Raghu Pratap was relieved by the Raghunath. The two Sapper and Miners companies at Gilgit were also relieved by the two companies from Jammu under Commandant Devi Singh, while General Baj Singh replaced General Suram Chand in the command of the Gilgit Brigade. The Body Guards could not, however, be relieved immediately as the Raghubir (6th J&K Infantry) which was to take over from it was not yet fully trained due to the difficulty in obtaining the requisite number of instructors for the purpose from the Indian Army. The 3rd battalion also could not be relieved but for a different reason. By the time the 5th Ramgole Battalion reached Gilgit in September 1892 for relieving the 3rd Battalion, the situation in the region had become such that the change over was not considered advisable. Besides, the Ramgole had reached Gilgit in a state of shock, having lost two officers and 17 men enroute due to an outbreak of cholera. Major Abdullah Khan, considered to be one of the smartest officers, and also a promising one, was among those who died of the disease.

TROUBLE IN CHITRAL AND CHILAS 1892-93

While the relief programme of the Gilgit troops was half way through, trouble arose in Chitral. At the end of 1892 Aman-ul-Mulk, the strong and astute ruler of Chitral, died and a scramble for Mehtarship among his seventeen sons commenced. Afzul-ul-Mulk the second son happened to be in Chitral at the time of the old Mehtras death, while the eldest son Nizam-ul-Mulk was away in Yasin being the Governor of that place. Afzal-ul-Mulk immediately seized arms and the treasure in the fort and then proceeded to murder all his brothers present in Chitral, to remove all bidders for the throune.

He then set off with an army to Yasin to fight his elder brother Nizam-ul-Mulk. Nizam put up a feeble resistance and then fled to Gilgit, while Afzul returned to Chitral and proclaimed himself the ruler. The Kashmir Durbar extended their recognition to Afzul after he had given an assurance that he would follow the policy of his late father. He was, however, not to stay on the throne too long. His uncle Sher Afzal, who many years before had struggled for this throne with Aman-ul-Mulk and having been beaten each time had been living in exile in Afghanistan, now suddenly reappeared on the scene. With a hundred horsemen and some followers collected on the way he surprised Afzul-ul-Mulk at the Chitral fort and killed him to proclaim himself as the Mehtar of Chitral.

With Sher Afzal having political links in Afghanistan, his taking over of Chitral was considered a direct threat to Gilgit. The British were not prepared to loose their hold on Chitral which Aman-ul-Mulk and even his son Afzal-ul-Mulk had permitted them. Consequently they refused to recognise Sher Afzal, and Nizam-ul-Mulk who had been living quietly in Gilgit was encouraged to claim the throne of Chitral. Picking up courage Nizam-ul-Mulk ~~who had been~~ set off for Chitral with a small force. Sher Afzal had collected about 1200 men on the border to oppose the new claiment. Ostensively to meet the threat caused by the concentrration of the hostile tribals on the border, but in actual fact to help Nizam's cause, a force consisting of 100 men of the Body Guard and 50 of the 3rd Battalion was despatched to the border. Adjutant Nain Singh and Jamedar Nathu of the Body Guard distinguished themselves in the action to disperse the hostile concentration while Nizam-ul-Mulk entered Chitral without difficulty. Sher Afzal once again fled to Afghanistan to remain a source of trouble for the British. Nizam-ul-Mulk was recognised the Mehtar by the British through the Kashmir

Durbar on the same terms as had been settled with his father.[32]

There was evidently to be no respite for the Gilgit Brigade; particularly the Body Guard Battalion whose relief had been held up as noted before. Coming at the heels of the Chitrali affair was the more serious trouble in Chilas in March 1893. Earlier in 1892 a deputation from Gor had ~~txxthm~~ appealed to the Kashmir Durbar for protection against the Chilasis, who were likely to creat trouble for Gor. Consequently a detachment of 50 men from the Body Guard was despatched to Gor. This party was attacked by the Chilasis while it was on its way to Gor and as a retaliatory measure Major Averill Daniel attacked and occupied the Chilas fort with about 266 men of the Body Guard at the end of Feburary 1893. The Chilasis were, however, not prepared to accept such a situation and on 6 March a large number of armed tribals, shouting and beating drums advanced towards the fort and as the tribals approached to about 200 yards of the fort, fire was opened by the Body Guards. The enemy advance was halted and he retreated to the village. In order now to forestall a fresh attack on the fort, Major Daniel ordered Lieut Moberly to attack the village with 35 men of the Body Guard under Jemadar Gan Singh. The village was found to be full of armed men but the Body Guards who "all together behaved with conspicuous gallantry" succeeded in clearing the first row of houses but as they tried to advance further they found the going very tough. Obviously the Body Guards were too few in numbers and as the enemy started moving round their flanks, Lieut Moberly, who was himself wounded, ordered Jemadar Gan Singh to retire. Major Daniel now determined to attack the village with a great force and

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32. Draft History of Jammu and Kashmir Rifles produced by the Regimental Centre in 1963 pp 40-41 and J&K Administrative Report 1892-93.

leaving behind 120 men in the fort he sallied out with about 140 men. The troops advanced in two parties. One under Subedar Man Singh went straight for the village and gained the outer edge while the other under Major Daniel advanced on the eastern side of the village. Major Daniel's party came under very heavy and accurate fire as it passed by the Mosque. Maj Daniel He was killed while leading the advance and so was Adjutant Nain Singh who led the advance after him. Subedar Bir Singh then took over the command but it was not long before he too was killed. On the other flank subedar Man Singh was severely wounded and the only surviving officer Jemadar Gan Singh was now left with no alternative but to collect all the men and retreat into the fort. The Body Guards were pursued by the enemy in their retirement but Gan Singh with a few men was able to hold him in check while the rest withdrew. The withdrawal was also covered by the men from the fort under Lieut Moberly. Sepoy Manglu came up for special mention for his gallant conduct in picking up an ammunition box and rushing out of the fort to the aid of Jemadar Gan Singh through a fire swept area. The enemy ultimately attacked the fort but this was successfully beaten back by the garrison under Lieut Moberly and Jemadar Gan Singh. Desultory fire, however, continued till while 2 a.m. next morning when the enmy finally withdrew.[33]

On counting dead bodies and feshly dug graves 250 of the enemy were estimated to have been killed but the losses of the Body Guard had also been heavy. Besides Major Daniel, three Indian Officers and 17 men had been killed while one Indian Officer and 30 men were wounded of whom three died of their wounds subsequently. Among the Indian Officer killed was the dashing Adjutant Nain Singh and Subedar Man Singh who had earned such a good name in the Hunza-Nagar Campaign.[33-A]

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33. Gazettee of India May 20, 1893
33-A. Ibid.

Meanwhile 200 men of the Rangole under Lieutenant Harman had rushed from Bunji to Chilas, covering a distance of 56 miles in 48 hours. This was some achievement considering the fact that the march was over the most difficult road; so steep in places that the men had to go down on all the fours to be able to negotiate it. It was only after the arrival of these reinforcements that the tribals abandoned their efforts to drive the British out of their territory.[34]

After this action the remaining portion of the relief programme was completed. The Rangole relieved the 3rd Pioneer in October 1893. The 6th Battalion was by now fully trained and had reached Gilgit to relieve the Body Guard. The Body Guard returned to Jammu after over three years of active service in Gilgit during which it had ~~libraily~~ literally soaked itself in glory. On its arrival at Jammu it was inspected by His Highness the Maharaja, the Resident and the C-in-C Raja Ram Singh, and praises were showered on it for its distinguished conduct both in the Hunza-Nagar campaign as well as during the severe fighting that took place at Chilas in the spring of 1893. At the parade awards were distributed to the officers and men for gallantry displayed during their stay in Gilgit. The following were awarded the Order ofMerit Class III for distinguished service during the fighting a-t Chilas:-[35]

Subedar Gan Singh
Sepoy Bahadhur Gurung
Sepoy Nariban
Sepoy Neala
Sepoy Jai Bahadhur
Sepoy Tika

[36]

REORGANISATION-1893-95

As a result of the lessons learnt during the Hunza-Nagar campaign, the units of the Gilgit Brigade on reaching Jammu underwent some overhauling for improvement in their efficiency. The Low castes in the Ist Battery were discharged to improve the

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34. ~~Ibid~~ Jammu Archives Mil Block E-47 of 1930 file 377-M-87
35. Administrative Report 1893-94
36. Based on Administrative Reports for the years 1893 to 1895

Battery's discipline. Then some men of the Raghu Pratap who had been found unfit during the operations were discharged with gratuity while some others were transferred to the Regular army. Although the 3rd Battalion had not taken much active part in the operations, it had come up for adverse remarks by ~~Lt Col~~ Lieut Colonel Durand the British Agent in Gilgit. This Battalion, therefore, underwent the greatest overhauling on its return to Jammu in October/November 1893.

To improve further the efficiency of the Imperial Service Corps all troops were issued with Martini Henry rifles. A rifle range was constructed at Jammu for regular firing of weapons as part of training. The cavalry was issued with Martini Henry carbines. The equipment of the battalies was also overhauled and new ponies and mules were purchased to replace the old ones. Efforts were also made to improve the standards of education of troops which, being very low, was making the imparting of training difficult. The start was made by authorising schools masters in each regiment, primarily for the education of the Ncos.

Military stores

Military Stores at Jammu, Srinagar and Gilgit were reorganised and placed in charge of the Superintendent Military stores who worked directly under the Quarter Master General. Considerable amount of uniforms and equipment both on payment and free issue was handled by the Military Stores during the period. Of significance were the 2000 (poshteens) - the winter clothing provided to the troops in Gilgit. Besides, 3000 pairs of stout chappals made at Peshawar of the same pattern as used by the Khyber Rifles were procured and distributed to troops on active service. ~~Not withstanding~~ In spite of the ~~insurmountable~~ numerous difficulties ~~of~~ in placing stores at such distant places as Hunza, Gupis and Chilas, the work of the transport and supply was admirably carried out by Captain Yielding who headed the Supply and Transport organisation specially set up for Gilgit.

The Gilgit Levies

A scheme for raising of local levies for Gilgit was also approved. Under the scheme the strength of the unit was to be 300. It was to be officered mainly by the British, but was to have some of its own officers for service in the junior rank. They were to be armed with the Snider Carbines. The pay was fixed at Rs. 6/- p.m. plus free rations on mobilisation for operations and training. During the off training/operational period they were authorised a pay of Rs. 3/- p.m. They were to have no uniform other than the turban and the 'Kamarband'. The strength was to be drawn in equal numbers from Hunza, Nagar and Punial.

Medical

Lieut Colonel
Lt Col Dean M D took over the charge of the Medical Department in May 1892 and immediately set about to improve upon the existing medical set up which was, till then inadequately organised to meet the vital requirement of the maintenance of the health of the troops. The first requirement was that of a hospital at Jammu where the bulk of the troops was located. Till now the army had been utilising the hospital facility as provided by the Civil Hospital. A portion of the old magazine at Jammu (Where the Government College for Women in the city is presently located) was converted into a reasonably good hospital with a proper dispensary and proper wards for the sick. Besides, two more doctors were employed in addition to the ones already looking after the medical aspect of the troops. Dr Jagan Nath was made responsible for the medical care of the troops at Jammu and complete medical equipment for three regiments of infantry and a battery of artillary was now provided for the Jammu ISC Brigade. The army was also provided with 50 field stretchers, and Hill 'Dandies' of the best type, for casualty evacuation. 12 boys were selected for training as Medical Assistant at the Lahore Medical School. Large quantities of drugs and

instruments were also provided to the Gilgit force, which was under the medical care of Surgeon Captain Roberts. The Srinagar garrison was put under the medical care of Dr A Mitra.

Service conditions- Gilgit

In September 1893 the Government of India decided that the Kashmir Imperial Service troops in the Gilgit Command be issued rations and extras on the same scale as the native troops of the Indian Army serving in the same Command. Improvements were also made in the accomodation of the troops stationed in Gilgit; both with regards to making it more comfortable as well as more hygenic to live in.

Satwari Cantonement

Most of the Sepoy lines, spread ~~over~~ all over the Jammu city, were in bad condition. All were overcrowded and many of them were unsafe due to bad state of repairs. A scheme for location of all troops in a suitable cantonement to be constructed at Satwari was approved and accordingly permanent lines for one mountain battery in the new cantonement were constructed by the end of 1894. Plans for the consructionof more accomodation were thereafter completed and submitted for approval.

The State Band

The only event of significance with regard to the 'Regular' army during the period was the reorganisation of the State Band under Mr C J Burrow. Largerly due to the great zeal shown by Mr Burrow, the state Band, even in its infancy, was considered by acknowledgable sources to be as good as any other native infantry band. Burrow had been very particular in choosing his men (who were all Dogras), and did not accept pensioners on reemployment, as was the practice earlier. He not only looked after their training as musicians but also took keen interest in their mental and physical health. There was no game which his bandsmen did not play as well

as other units of the State army and they often challenged infantry units to these games often getting the better of them. Unfortunately the terms and conditions of the bandsmen were not as good as elsewhere in India and there appears to have been efforts by the army units in India to entice away the State's bandsmen by offering them more lucrative prospects. In fact many of them actually deserted and joined Indian Army units, while some went as far as Burma, where they got enlisted in the native corps. Burrow was, however, not to be beaten in this game too, and displaying great energy he had the deserters traced and got some eleven of them brought back to Jammu, including those that had gone to Burma. There were no more desertions from the Band after that. Interestingly Mr Burrow identified himself completely with his men and wore a turban on ceremonial occasions like no other European would have done

The Supernumerary list

By the end of 1894 all those on the Supernumerary List who were fit for employment on active service had gradually been transferred to the active list. Now only those remained on the Supernumerary List who, though not fit for active service, were entitled to the boon of being graded on this list by virtue of their long and good service to the State.

Relieving of the Financial Burden

The increasing expenses of the Gilgit Frontier were now beginning to tell heavily on the State exchequer. In all questions relating to the Gilgit Frontier the State Council had invariably to conform to the wishes of the representatives of the Imperial Government; the "Durbar availing themselves freely of the valuable advice of the Resident in all matters of political and administrative ~~matters~~ importance" Probably on appeals by the State Government relief from the Imperial Government came in the following form :-

a) Dispensing with of the tribute present of a horse and trappings, pashm and yarn hereto fore made by the State in terms of the Treaty of Amritsar.

b) The Imperial Government agreeing to pay 3/4ths of the expenditure incurred in provisioning the Kashmir Durbar troops in Chilas district.

c) Re-arming the Imperial Service troops with Martini Henry rifles and carbines free of cost and free supply of the author-ised services ammuniations.

THE CHITRAL CAMPAIGN- 1895[37]

While these efforts at re-organising, rearming and improving the service conditions of the ISC were going on, trouble again errupted in Chitral in early 1895. The cause of the trouble this time was the muder of Nizam-ul-Mulk on Ist January 1895 at the instance of his step brother Amir-ul-Mulk. The first move to occupy the vacant throne was made by Umra Khan of Jandul, immediately bordering Chitral in the south. Advancing with 3000 men he succeeded in capturing Kila Drosh on the southern frontier and thereafter prepared for an advance on Chitral. Here he was joined by the old aspirant Sher Afzal.[38]

On the eve of new year, which brought with it the trouble in Chitral, Ist Kashmir Mountain Battery (on its second tenure in Gilgit), 4th Kashmir Rifles (Raghunath), 5th Kashmir Light Infantry (Ramgole) and 6th Kashmir Infantry (Raghubir) were located in Gilgit. There were also the two companies of Sappers and Miners as usual. The Raghunath had constructed the important fort at Gupis through a "prisse worthy performance" while the Ramgole and the Raghubir Battalions held posts on the Bunji-Chilas line. All the units had been well reported upon and Colonel Bruce, the new British Agent at Gilgit had gone on record to remark that "the Government of India are fortunate in having the services of so excellant a body of men as the troops now employed in the defence of Gilgit Frontier."[39] Trouble arose in Chitral as if to test the truth of his remarks.

37. Based primarily on the Gazette of India May 25, 1895 pp 448-74
38. Draft History of Jammu and Kashmir Rifles pp 43-44
39. Administrative Report 1894-95

After the murder of Nizam-ul-Mulk trouble in Chitral was quite expected. In anticipation of what might happen the Agent in Gilgit had immediately got the garrisons at Mastuj and Ghizr forts reinforced. When the threat to Chitral crystalised, with the initial move of Umra Khan, he moved the bulk of the Raghunath Battalion under Colonel Jagat Singh to reinforce the Chitral fort which was now in imminent danger of being attacked. General Baj Singh decided to accompany the Battalion to Chitral. Before Umra Khan and Sher Afzal made their next move the garrison at Chitral, which was placed under the operational control of ~~Capt~~ Captain Cambell, comprised of 5 British officers, 301 ~~Indian~~ officers and men of the Raghunath and 99 all ranks from 14 Sikh.

It was about 1630 hours on 3 March 1895 when the news of the approach of Sher Afzal with his force reached Captain Campbell at the fort. Captain Campbell immediately ordered Captain C V F Townshend to take out 200 men of the Rathunath Battalion to ascertain the authenticity of the news and also challange Sher Afzal's force, if the information was correct. ~~Colonel Jagat Singh and~~ General Baj Singh, though not really required, decided to accompany their troops, probably to make sure that they performed well under the threatening situation and to help Townshend where it became necessary. Townshend then sent out an advance guard of one section under Subedar Badri Nar Singh and detailed Captain Baird to accompany this section. He then left a detatchment of 50 men under Subedar Hari Chand at the 'Sarai' (Inn) and with the rest of the force he took up a position on the eastern spur commanding the Ayun-Chitral road with a clear field of fire to the front upto 1000 yards. MeanWhile Captain Baird had taken his section on the high ground to the east and as now he was operating away from the main body, Townshend had to reinforce him with another 25 men under Subedar Shamu. Townshend was thus left with just about 100 men when he

received news that Sher Afzal was in a house a few hundred yards in front of his position on the spur. Townshend advanced with his men on to the house but found it vacant. On reaching the house, however, Captain Townshend saw a lot of men moving about in another hamlet about 500 yards ahead of him. Expecting to find Sher Afzal there he, therefore, continued his advance. In the meantime Captain Baird moving on the flank was fired upon by the enemy from the area of the hamlet. Townshend therefore engaged the enemy from ~~the area~~ his sidd and advancing tactically by fire and movement reached as close as 200 yards from the hamlet. The men of the Raghunath with Townshend now came under very accurate fire from the enemy who was equally well armed with Martini and Snider rifles. So much so that they began to get hit even though they had taken up a position behind a stone reveted bund. As there was no other place to take cover in the 200 yards between their present position and the hamlet, any further advance towards the hamlet under such deadly fire from the enemy was not possible. Townshend, therefore, decided to hold his position with his hundred men until Baird should move along the hill slopes westwards and thus turn the enemy flank. The village could then have been easily rushed. However, time went by and there was no sign of Bairds party making the desired move. On the other hand small parties of the enemy began to move on Townshend's flank, thereby threatending his rear. By then it was 1830 hours and soon it would have been dark. Something had to be done fast. Captain Cambell who had arrived on the scene by then ordered Townshend to rush the village immediately. It was a problem collecting the men for the attack as they had, in the process of finding cover for themselves against such deadly enemy fire, got scattered and it was well near impossible to move out of cover to the forming up place for attack without being shot by the enemy. Captain Cambell himself got shot in the knee while trying to bring up men to the

assault line. The presence of Colonel Jagat Singh and General Baj Singh now came in handy and ~~they were~~ (he along with Colonel Jagat Singh was) able to goad some men to move up. As a reasonable number had been collected, Townshend, who could no longer afford to wait in view of the dusk closing in, sounded the charge. As the men began to scramble up the 'bund' they were met with the most close and destructive fire of the enemy. Seeing the hesitancy among the men, General Baj Singh himself joined in the charge alongwith Captain Townshend, Colonel Jagat Singh and Major Bhikam Singh. The attack had not progressed more than a few yards when the General was struck by a bullet and killed while Major Bhikam fell mortally wounded. Any move forward by others became impossible after they had advanced 30 to 40 yards and the assault fizzled out as the men started taking cover behind stones. The situation having become hopeless Townshend ordered a retreat, first to the bund and then taking up alternative positions on the way, back to the fort. The withdrawing troops were closely followed by the emboldened enemy but a company of 14 Sikh that had been ordered out of the fort for the purpose saw the Raghunaths safe into the fort along with their wounded.

Captain Baird on the fight flank had fared no better. He himself had been wounded in the early stages of the action and the enemy had been able to cut his retreat. The party under Subedar Badri Nar Singh ultimately reached the fort at about 2000 hours after having to fight the enemy, that tried to block its withdrawal, at a number of places. Baird had had to be carried by the men all the way to the fort. In the process of this withdrawal several of the party had got killed while effecting some marvellous escapes through enemy positions. Baird had got wounded a second time during one of these escapades.

In all the Raghunath's had suffered 23 killed and 33 wounded in what could be termed as a ~~useless~~ futile operation. Obviously Captain

Cambell had acted in a head strong manner in ordering a hurried attack so late in the day which was doomed from its very stage. It was a frontal attack with insufficient numbers against a strongly entrenched enemy armed with modern weapons, and launched without any covering fire and that too from a forming up place that was under heavy and accurate enemy fire. That the attack did not have the slightest chance of success was obvious to all on the spot except 'Cambell. He had in fact been advised against it by Townshend but he had insisted on going through it even though the action could have easily been postoned till the next morning to great advantage. For the Raghunaths it was just the question of obeying the orders right or wrong and General Baj Singh laid down his life in upholding the good name of his troops while employed on an impossible task.

Once inside the fort Captain Townshend, on whom the operational command of the fort had devolved, after Captain Cambell had been incapacitated due to his wound, set about to organise the defences within the fort while Sher Afzal's force laid seige to it. The fort was dominated from all the sides by features around at ranges varying from 700 yards downwards and the enemy taking advantage of the situation quickly constructed 'Sangars' all around the fort, from where he could fire effectively into it. Besides, there were out houses and walls around the fort which restricted the fire and view of the defenders and permitted the besigers to get close to the fort. As many of these walls and houses as was possible were demolished by the garrison before the enemy made it impossible for it to continue this work. With the timber brought from the demolished houses, overhead covers were built for posts within the fort. The men were put on half rations as the garrison prepared itself for

a seige that was expected to be long. For this the protection of the water point was even more important. Consequently a covered way, 35 yards long, was made to the water point on the bank of the river. The fort which contained more structures of wood than of stone was also very vulnerable to fires that could easily be started by the enemy. Heaps of earth were raised and sufficient quantity of water was stored inside the fort at all the vulnerable places to be able to fight such fires.

From the 4th of March to the date of the raising of the seige on 20th April is a saga of arduous work cheerfully performed, of difficulties encountered and surmounted and of privations suffered without murmur by the gallant garrison, the bulk of which comprised the Raghunath Battalion. Every night officers and men were at their posts or sleeping accoutred, ready to receive and repulse enemy assault, while during the day they worked harder and harder on strengthening of the defences. As a compliment to the conduct of the men of the garrison in general Captain Townshend in his despatch at the end of the seige wrote that "when so many did so well, it is hard to distinguish the sepoys who never murmured, took every thing calmly- the over work, the half rations of atta, the over-fatigues, practically getting no rest; they slept in accoutrement and on their posts throughout the seige".

The careful plans adopted by Captain Townshend in order to defeat the tactics of the enemy also deserve praise. During the seige the enemy made repeated attacks on the water point but was, each time, repulsed with heavy losses. The main stress in the defence was laid on alertness. Out of a total of 343 combatants fit for duty about 171 were employed on guard and santry duties every night. To prevent the enemy from sneaking up to the fort un-noticed at night, the area adjacent to the fort was lit up with beacon lights, to hold which Machicoulis galleries were constructed, one on

each parapet of the fort.

Inspite of all the alertness displayed by the sentries, the enemy on 7th April, after diverting the attention of the garrison by what was made to look like an attack on the water point, managed with great pluck to place large faggots and logs of wood in a pile against the corner of the gun tower and set fire to it. The tower was soon well on fire and ~~began to blaze up~~ blazing up. All men not on duty turned out to fight the fire with mud and water. Their work was greatly hindered by the strong wind that was fanning the fire and the shower of bullets from the enemy positions outside the fort. Subedar Badri Nar Singh and Sepoy Awi Singh of the Raghunath showed great bravery in face of enemy fire, while engaged in fighting the fire. The fire was finally put out at 1000 ~~hrs~~ hours that day, ~~having lasted four to five hours~~ for. The enemy tried to restart the fire in the gun tower during the night 7/8 April but the sentries were alert this time and a fire alarm was sounded before the red hot ambers could light the bundle of faggots that had been placed next to them.

While the whole story of the seige forms a brilliant chapter in the annals of Indian Military history, one episode particularly stands out amongst the numerous gallant actions fought by the men during this period of trial. This episode concerns a sortie made by ~~Lt~~ Lieutenant Harley of 14 Sikh with 40 of his men and 60 men of the Raghunath Ballalion for the purpose of blowing up the enemy's mine which had come into dangerous proximity of the fort.

Having failed to burn out the gun tower the enemy began to work on a tunnel from the 'summer house' about 50 yards away from the fort to undermine the gun tower. In order to drown the noise of the digging, he began playing the 'tom tom' and Pathan pipes in the 'summer house' every night after 11 April 1895. To further distract the attention of the garrison he kept more or less a continuous

fire from his rifles and match locks. It was only at mid-night on the 16th that the suspicions of the garrison were aroused when one of the sentries heard for a while, what he thought was sound of underground digging. Unfortunately the sound ceased before it could be confirmed by the Garrison Commander and no further action on it was taken. The sentries had, however, been alerted and one of them again reported to having heard knocking sounds at 1100 hours on 17th April. The sound was now quite clear and there was no doubt that a mine was being attempted. The mine in fact seemed to have progressed to a dangerous extent and there was now hardly anytime for countermining. The only course open, therefore, was to somehow destroy the mine before it was completed. Consequently Captain Townshend detailed Lieutenant Harley with 40 of his own men and 60 men of the Raghunath under Major Bhagwan Singh and Subedar Gandip Singh to perform the task of destroying the mine.

The party was let out of the Garden Gate of the fort just opposite the 'Summer House' at 1600 hours on 17th April. A few hurried shots and the party rushed into the 'Summer House'. 30 Pathans in the house were taken completely by surprise and after firing a few random shots at the Dogras and Sikhs they bolted down the garden wall. The 'Summer House' was captured but not without loss. Two men of the Raghunath had got killed in the process. On the enemy side two Pathans were shot dead and two taken prisoners before others fled. Work on the demolition of the mine was then started immediately while some of the Raghunath's and the Sikhs engaged the Pathans who had not withdrawn any farther than the end of the garden and were from there keeping up a continuously heavy fire on the 'Summer House'.

The mine shaft was found just outside the House behind the garden wall and 35 Chitralis were bayoneted in the mouth of the mine just as they rushed out in panic. Soon after 1700 hours the mine

was blown up as the desperados came rushing back into the fort by the garden gate, after having accomplished a dangerous task. The effect of the blast was soon visible as the whole mine was burst open right upto the foot of the gun tower and now lay exposed like a trench. The party had indeed done its job well and saved the fort in the nick of time. A total of 8 men had got killed and 13 wounded in this short and daring action, of which the share of the Raghunath was 5 killed and 8 wounded. Sepoy Nikoo of the 4th Kashmir Rifles displayed conspicuous gallantry being the first, along with Naik Garja Singh of 14 Sikhs, to jump into the mine shaft.

The first attempt to reinforce the Chitral garrison was made by Lieutenant Edwardes on 7th March when he set off for Chitral from Mastuj with 40 men of the Raghunath under Subedar Dharam Singh and 20 of the Bengal Sappers and Miners under Lieutenant Fowler. This party was, however, attacked at Reshun and though the attack was repulsed it was at a heavy cost of 6 men killed and 13 wounded. Besides, the enemy made it impossible for Edwards to move forward and he was compelled to take up a defensive position in a house at Reshun. Here he was besieged by the enemy in large numbers. The seige lasted for about three days and what the men of the Raghunath went through during this period is best told by Lieutenant Edwards himself in a private letter that he wrote to Colonel Chamberlain the Military Secretary in the J&K State. The relevant portion of his letter reads as follows :-

> " As regrds Kashmir Sepoys, the party belonged to 4th Kashmir Rifles. The behaviour of all of them was splendid specially of Sub Dharam Singh. I cannot speak too highly of his conduct. Throughout the very trying time of our first attack and subsequent seige, he was cool, plucky, cheerful and most energetic from the beginning to the end. The men had a very trying time on the 7th, the day we were attacked. But inspite of this, their short rations of food and water, they

stuck to it and worked with great pluck and energy".

"The poor fellows who were wounded suffered in perfect silence never a groan or complaint from any of them.

"This was encouraging for those who did their best to attend to their wounds. We had no hospital arrangements so we could only try and keep the wounds clean and bandage them with whatever material we could find. I need hardly say how grieved I am. So many poors fellows lost their lives but we were in a very tight place and God knows I did my best for them."[40]

After three days of hard fighting the Pathans and the Chitrális proposed a truce to Edwardes, saying that the British Agent had made peace with Sher Afzal at Chitral. Edwarde accepted the truce, more as a matter of expediency than any belief in the enemy's professions. It was not just a question of defending themselves against attacks, which they had successfully done so far. The wrost was that they had to sally out of the house, in which they had enterenched themselves, whenever they wanted water. A large enemy force was all around them and with their casualties mounting they could not have held out against another large scale attack. The enemy was probably not aware of the miserable state of the defenders and rather than attack the position, he had resorted to treachery. After the truce the two British Officers were invited to witness a polo match and as they arrived at the Polo Ground, both were made prisoners. The post was then attacked while Subedar Dharam Singh and his men were standing off guard. The Dogras fought gallantly but, being greatly outnumbered, could not hold the attack. All of them are believed to have been killed fighting. Any prisoners that may have been taken from among the wounded were probably sold off as slaves never to be heard of again.

As the military situation in Chitral took a serious turn the Assistant British Agent at Gilgit issued instructions to Lieut Colonel

40. Jammu Archieves Mil Block E-47 of 1930 file 377-M-87

J G Kelly, Officer Commanding 32 Pioneers, to move up half of his Battalion from Bumar and Jullipur in Chilas to Gilgit. Consequently about 400 men of 32 Pioneers reached Gilgit between 20th and 22nd March. At the same time two guns of Ist Kashmir Mountain Battery were moved from Nomal to Gilgit. These troops and the guns were to form part of the expeditionary force that was being planned for Chitral. Lieut Colonel Kelly was then directed by the Commander-in-Chief India to assume military command in the Gilgit Agency and to make such disposition and movement of forces under his Command as he might consider necessary both for the defence of Gilgit as well as the relief of Chitral.

After having made suitable arrangements for the protection of Gilgit, Chilas and the posts along the Indus river at Bunji and Ramghat, Lieut Colonel Kelly left Gilgit on 23rd March with a force consisting of 396 men of 32 Pioneers, and two guns of the Kashmir Battery, on his 220 miles march to Chitral for the relief of the besieged garrison there. This force was subsequently reinforced by 40 men of the 4th Kashmir Rifles and 150 Levies.

Ghizr was reached on 31 March and there after the column was not only faced with the difficult situation of having to cross the Shandur Pass while it was still heavily covered with snow, but also with the problem of transport caused by large scale desertions among the coolie force that was accompanying the column. An attempt to cross the Pass was made on Ist April but it proved unsuccessful; the artillery mules and transport ponies being unable to make their way through deep snow. This necessitated the abandoning of the ponies and the mules and the Column Commander was thus obliged to utilise the services of the fighting element in the column for the conveyance of guns across the Pass during his second attempt on 5th April. The task of taking the guns across proved to be a most arduous one. All tracks had been obliterated and dragging of the guns across country through deep snow was extremely laborious. The column ultimately

crossed over in two batches; the second one reaching Laspur on the other side as late as 9 April. The severity of the weather was such that a total of 43 cases of frosthite and 63 of snow blindness occurred among the menbefore they could get across.

The Gilgit Force first encountered enemy opposition on 9 April at Chakalwat (Derband) where the enemy was entrenched in a strong defensive position blocking the route of advance. At that time the second batch was still in the process of negotiating the Pass. Colonel Kelley, however, decided to attack with whatever he had; that is a total of 280 men, which included ~~the~~ 40 men of the Raghunath and the two mountain guns of the Ist Battery that had crossed over in the first batch. The enemy was routed and Colonel Kelly advanced with ~~the~~ his force ~~to~~ towards Mastuj where the garrison comprising of 100 men of 4th Kashmir Rifles had been under seige for the last eighteen days or so. Mastuj was reached the same day and the relieved garrison joined the Gilgit Force on its way to Chitral. The second batch of Kellyis Force which crossed the Shandur Pass on 9~~th~~ April also caught up with the rest of the Force at Mastuj.

The second engagement was fought on 13 April at Nisa Gol. The position at Nisa Gol was a particularly strong one, considered by the Chitralis to be impregnable. The enemy here had erected sangars to dominate the road which zig zagged down into the nalla. Colonel Kelley deployed his 32 Pioneers and the two mountain guns to give covering fire while the Company of the Raghunaths desended ~~down~~ into the nalla along a goat path. The Kashmir Sappers and Miners were used a-head of the Raghunaths to improve the goat path. Eventually a party of about 15 reached the other bank and ~~on it the Raghuna the~~ established a the required bridge head. As the Raghunaths were performing this task, the Gunners of the Ist Ba-ttery were demoli-ing the sangars one by one. The Levies on the other hand were employed in a flanking move to thurn the enemy's left flank.

Being threatened by the Raghunaths on the right and the Levies on the the left the enemy got unnerved and he took to flight. In this fight at Nisa Gol the J&K troops suffered three killed, (NK Khojoo of the Mountain Battery and sepoys Mani Ram Rana and Parbir Gharti of the 4th Battalion), and five wounded (three of the 4th Battalion and two of the Kashmir Sappers and Miners).

After Nisa Gol no further opposition was met; the enemy retreating all along in face of the advance of the Gilgit Force. Neverthless, the Force had still to endure considerable physical hardships during the advance. On the 18th of April the bridge over the river having been demolished by the enemy, the troops had to ford breast high water at the imminent risk of being swept off their feet. After successfully surmounting all difficulties, the Gilgit Force ultimately reached Chitral on the 20th of April i.e. 29 days after leaving Gilgit. The news of the arrival of Colonel Kelley's force at a day's march from Chitral had, however, reached Sher Afzal on the 19th itself and he upstuck from the vicinity of the fort and fled to whence he came, much before the arrival of the Gilgit Force at Chitral.

The Chitral Campaign thus came to an end. The British interests in Chitral had indeed been served as Shuja-ul-Mulk the youngest legtimate son of Aman-ul-Mulk was duly installed as the Mehtar on the same terms and conditions as his father. In order to avoid such a situation arising again, two battalions of Indian Infantry and a section of Mountain battery were permanently located at Chitral.

Lieutenant Stewart of the Royal Artillery, the officer deputed to superintend the Kashmir Battery reported in enthusiastic terms on the admirable work done by the gunners of the right section during the Chitral expedition. According to him the Battery rendered valuable service during the actions at Chakalwat and Nisa Gol; on

the later occasion coming into action against 'sangars' at ranges of 475 and even 275 yards. He reported that the men had to advance right up to get a sight of the 'sangars' which were required to be knocked down, and in the process were exposed to the fire of all the 'sangars' at ranges from 300 to 100 yards all the time. Three out of the six men on the guns were shot of whom only one recovered. The Havildar Major was wounded, three drivers killed and two ponies shot. The menn on the guns were, however, reported to have behaved excellently. The shooting was straight though a little slow. Colonel Kelley also had a word of praise for the gunners and he is gone on record to remark that he had "never seen anything more perfectly steady than the men on the guns". The 40 men of the 4th Battalion who who aided the carriage of guns across also came up for much praise. It was reported that they "bore the brunt of carrying the guns, ammunition and their own kit and rations through 25 miles of snow, in which they floundered upto and over their waists..... the men literally carried their loads till they dropped from fatigue" and that in the process nearly all the men were quite snow blind."[41]

All in all the gratest contribution towards the success of the Chitral Campaign was undoubtedly made by the Kashmir Imperial Services Corps and this fact was duly recognised by the Governor General himself. The Kashmir troops, however, had to pay a very heavy price for attaining this recognition. The State Force suffered as many as 72 killed, which included three officers, and 49 wounded, including one Officer. Of the wounded three subsequently died of their wounds.

Honours and Awards

Colonel, His Highness Maharaja Pratap Singh who had since regained, even though partially, his powers as the ruler of the State

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41. Administrative Report 1895-96

was now promoted to be Honorary Major General while Lt Col Raja Ram Singh CB,C in C State Forces was made Military Knight Commander of the Order of Bath in recognition of the services of J&K troops in the Chitral Campaign. 23 personnel were awarded the Order of Merit 3rd Class (being the highest award that the British were prepared to give to the State Forces personnel), two of whom were from the Ist Mountain Battery and 21 from the 4th Battalion Raghunath including Colonel Jagat Singh, the Commanding Officer, and Major Bhagwan Singh, for their gallantry during the operations. The Governor General in Council also notified posthumous award of Order of Merit 3rd Class to Subedar Dharam Singh, Havildar Ranjit Singh and L/NK Budhia for their most gallant action at Reshum before they fell. Commandant Hazara Singh of the Ist Battery was awarded the title of Rai Bahadur for the good work done by his Battery. Chitral gratuity was sanctioned by the Government of India for mounted and Staff Officers of the State amounting to about one months pay. Similar gratuity at varying rates was probably awarded to other officers and men who took part in the operations.[42]

The State gave its own awards in recognition of the good work done by the troops. Swords of honour, varying in value, were awarded to the following officers for their conduct during the Chitral operations (1895).

(a) Col Jagat Singh	4 KR
(b) Major Bhagwan Singh	4 KR
(c) Major Beli Ram	4 KR
(d) Adjutant Badri Narsing	4 KR
(e) Subedar Gandeep Singh	4 KR
(f) Subedar Kalu Chand	4 KR
(g) Subedar Jitman	4 KR

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42. Ibid

(h) Jemadar Sohnu 4 KR

Two NCOs and 12 Sepoys of 4 Kashmir Rifles were awarded Khillats valued between Rs. 60 and Rs. 50/-

The Maharaja also instituted a medal for all troops that took part in the Chitral Campaign, the specimen of which is held in the Australian Museum at Sydney. Remunerations were paid to the troops for the damage done to their clothing during the operations. Colonel Jagat Singh was promoted to the rank of General while, for the services rendered by General Raj Singh, his brother Colonel Bijai Singh was promoted General.[43]

Her Majesty the Queen Empress of India was graciously pleased to permit 4th Kashmir Rifles (Raghunath) to bear upon its standards/ Colours the words "Defence of Chitral" in comemoration of its gallant conduct during the defence of Chitral vide Notification No. 397 on the General Orders, Military Department, Government of India dated 16th April 1897. Under the same Notification No. 1st Kashmir Mountain Battery was permitted to bear on its colours the name "Chitral", in commemoration of its gallant conduct in operations carried out for the relief of Chitral.[44]

DISBANDMENTS/REORGANISATION- 1896-97[45]

Immediately after the Chitral Campaign the Raghunath, Ramgole and Raghubir Battalions at Gilgit returned to Jammu on being relieved by the Raghu Pratap, Body Guard and the Ram Ranbir (as the 3 Pioneer Battalion came to be called). Apparently the Ram Ranbir had shown marked improvement under the command of Colonel Raja Farman Ali Khan and had been declared fit for taking the field. The 2nd Kashmir Mountain Battery which had taken part in a shooting competition conducted by British Officers from Sialkot and had stood second out of the four batteries (British and Indian) that

43. Administrative Report 1895-96 and 1896-97
44. Jammu Archives Mil Block B-47 of 1930 file 377-M-87
45. Based on Administrative Report 1896-97 and 1897-98

took part in the competition was now considered to be in a very satisfactory state and consequently it proceeded to Gilgit to relieve the Ist Battery. It may be of interest to mention that the Ramgole Battalion shortly after reaching Jammu sent a team to the Meerut Rifle Meet in Feburary 1896 and secured first position in Match No. 7.

In May 1896, certain proposals regarding reduction in the military expenditure of the State were received from the Government of India which were adopted in full by the State Council. Those concerning the Imperial Service Troops were as under :-

(a) The existing regiment of Kashmir Lancers was to be reduced to one squadron.

(b) The number of infantry battalions was to be reduced from the existing six battalions to just four, the strength of each battalion being raised from 600 to 702.

The Lancers

On the proposal being implemented the Kashmir Imperial Service Cavarly was reduced to one squadron of 150 all ranks. Some of the fit men who came under reduction were transferred to other regiments while the others were either given gratuity and retired from service or transferred to the Supernumerary List. Risaldar Sunit Singh was appointed as the Officer Commanding and Captain Pirie detailed as the Cavalry Inspecting Officers. So far the Cavalry had been receiving a raw deal at the hands of authorities that were. In fact it had been accorded last priority with regard to its equipment and replacement of its mounts which had led Major Drummond to resign from his appointment as the inspecting Officer, after he failed to get anything done for the improvement in the state of the Lancers. With the reduction in its size, the Cavalry could now be maintained properly even within the limited resources that could be allotted to it. Consequently the squadron was now fully equipped and all its old

horses replaced. The effect of the reorganisation was soon apparent when it took part in the combined artillery and cavalry manoeuvres at Sialkot and was very favourably commented upon.

The Infantry

From among the infantry the 6th Battalion (Raghubir) of the Jammu Brigade and the 3rd Battalion (Ram Ranbir) were picked up for disbandment. There does not appear to have been any particular reason for earmarking these two battalions for disbandment other than that they happened to be the last numbers in their respective brigades. All Officers, NCOs and men of these units who could not be absorbed in other units for raising their strengths to the new authorisations, were disposed off in the usual manner- retired with gratuity or taken on the supernumerary list. As part of the re-organisation of the remaining battalions, the strength of each which had been decreased from 625 to 600 in the previous year was now raised to 702. The substantive rank of Adjutant was abolished and Adjutancy was hence forth to be held by a selected Subedar or a Jemadar who was to receive extra allowance for this appointment. Arrangements were made to exchange the long pattern sword bayonets of the Rifles Battalions (2nd and 4th), with the short pattern with which the rifles regiments of the Indian Army were normally armed. Bagpipes were imported from England for issue to all the infantry battalions.

Artillery

Much attention was also paid to equipping and training of the mountain batteries. The Inspector General Imperial Service Troops was asked to direct that the firing practice of the Kashmir Batteries be carried out exactly as per the Royal Artillery in India; culminating in a similar competition. In order to create the competitive spirit, the State C-in-C promised to give a set of

bagpipes to the battery winning the competition. Ultimately as both batteries performed equally well a set of bag pipes was presented to both in 1896.

Army Headquarters

Some reorganisation was also done at the Army Headquarters level. The appointment of the Military Secretary was abolished and in its place the post of a Military Advisor was created. Consequently Lt Col Chamberlain relinquished his appointment and Major ET Gastrell took over as the Military Advisor in addition to being the Inspecting Officer. This was done probably for affecting a saving on the pays and allowances drawn by British Officers on deputation, which was a big drain on the resources of the State. Major Bishen Dass was appointed Secretary to the C-in-C. The appointments of the Adjutant General and Quarter Master General were upgraded to the rank of General. Consequently Colonel Nihal Singh and Colonel Sohnoo, who were holding the appointments of Adjutant General and Quarter Master General respectively, were both promoted to the rank of General.

Pay and Allowances

The total strength of the Army by the end of March 1897 was 7516. Of this 4001 comprised the Imperial Service Troops and 2660 the 'Regulars', while the various departments comprised of 855 all ranks. This strength may be compared with that in 1891 when it stood at 8955. As a result of the reduction in strength some increase in the pay of the men could be made and family pension at the rate of half the pay drawn at the time of death was sanctioned to the heirs of those killed in action. Wound pensions were also authorised as per Army Regulations in India. As a temporary measure the troops stationed in Jammu were given a special allowance of Rs. 1½ p.m. on account of the famine conditions prevailing there.

Health and Living Conditions

By 1897 some construction of new lines for the ISC at Satwari Bunji and Gilgit had been completed and the troops moved into them. Military hospitals were now functioning very satisfactorily at Jammu, Srinagar and Gilgit under surgeon Captain Durga Datta, Dr Mitra and Surgeon Captain Burden respectively. The Hakims and vaids who had been looking after the health of the troops prior to the present medical organisation were now employed as dressers and attendents in the military hospitals.

OTHER ACTIVITY[46]

The Regular Army

The Regular Army did not receive much attention except for some reduction in strength that was carried out. They continued to perform static duties at Jammu, Srinagar, Skardu and Ladakh. Halfa company of Ruder Shibnabh, however, appears to have been employed on active duty in Gilgit during 1895-96 while the ISC battalions were being reorganised. The Sappers and Minners remained the most worked. Detatchments worked on the Banihal Cart Road every year during spring and autumn when the Durbar moved to and back from Srinagar. One of its detachments was also employed for improving of the track over the difficult Darkot Pass to facilitate the movement of the Afghan Boundary Commission headed by Major General M Gerad CB, CSI.

The unit of the 'Regular' army that stole the lime light was the State Band. New instruments had been purchased and its performance had been gratly improved through the dedicated efforts of Mr Burrow. The Band had become very popular with the civilians for whose benefit it often performed; particularly in Srinagar during the Summer season. In appreciation of his good work Mr Burrow was presented with a silver cigar box purchased out of the subscriptions raised by several residents in Kashmir. The presentation was made by Colonel Sir A C Talbot, Resident in Kashmir.

46. Ibid

C-in-C's Tour of Krishen Ganga Valley

The C-in-C, Raja Ram Singh made an extensive tour of the Krishen Ganga Valley in 1896. The tour was made on horse back and on foot through snowy and impassable regions, never before visited by any member of the Royal family. The task, undertaken to gain personal experience of the area, was one that entailed great personal hardship and inconvenience, and was greatly appreciated by the State Council.

TIRAH EXPEDITION [47]

The year 1897 proved to be the most stormy on the North West Frontier, ever since the British influence along this border land replaced that of the Sikhs. During this year there was general uprising of the tribes from the Indus to the Tochi, which shook the entire frontier. The Maharaja of Kashmir, who was gradually gaining favour of the British was quick to offer his entire army to the British to help them tide over the crisis. However, knowing that the Maharajas entire army was, infact, already employed in the furtherence of their interests on another frontier, the British only accepted the services of the Ist Kashmir Mountain Battery for employment in the Tirah expedition that had been planned to bring the tribals of the region under control.

Consequently the Ist Battery proceeded on active service with the Tirah Expeditionary Force on 8th October 1897. It was then commanded by Commandant Khajoor Singh and was placed under the inspection of Lieut G F Mac Munn. The Battery arrived at Kohat on 12th October and at once joined the Force under Lieut General Sir W Lockhart. Another Officer Lieut T B Mac Kuntosh was attached to the Battery here and placed under the Command of Lieut Mac Munn.

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47. Based on Jammu Archives Mil Block G-36 of 1928 file GO-81/84-85, Mil Block B-47 of 1930 file 377-M-87, Administrative Report 1897-98 and History of the 5th Royal Gurkha Rifles (FF) pp 137 to 153

Although the Battery was to form part of the main column which was to invade Tirah, the entire battery did not move to ShinaWari where the column was concentrating for the advance. Two guns under Commandant Khajoor Singh had to be dropped at Usterzai where some trouble was anticipated, and therefore only two guns moved to ShinaWari under Mac Munn. MeanWhile it was reported that the military and hired labour that was engaged on the improvement of the road from Chagru Kotal towards Khorappa were being so harrassed by enemy sharp shooters, (who had occupied the heights west of the Chagru Defile), as to make the work on the road well near impossible. General Lockhart, therefore, decided to first attack these heights and also destroy the Dargai village whose inhabitants occupied these heights. Consequently a brigade column supported by a section of the Kashmir Battery was ordered to attack these heights from the Kotal, while another brigade with a battery was to make a detour from ShinaWari to the West so as to take the enemy from the rear.

The first column of which the Ist Battery formed part reached Kotal on the 18th of October. At Kotal the two guns were brought into action against hositle positions while the infantry worked their way on the ridge leading to Dargai. The enemy abondoned the heights on approach of the infantry and more so when he realised that his rear was threatened by the second brigade. However as the column withdrew from the picquets in thex afternoon, for move back to ShinaWari, the tribesmen grew aggressive again, and it was largely due to the excellent support of the J&K Guns that the column was able to withdraw unmolested.

On 20th October the main force left ShinaWari for Chagru Kotal on its way to Khoruppa. Three batteries, including the Kashmir Battery, (the second section having since rejoined), took up position at Kotal to support the main attack on Dargai and adjoining heights,

and opened up fire on hostile positions at a range of 1800 yards to prevent them from interfering with the advance of the infantry. The Pathans were completely shaken by the accurate fire of the artillery and the intrepid advance of the infantry and fled in face of the infantry charge. Dargai was captured and burnt and the force then advanced into the Khanki Valley. Khorapa was reached on the 21st of October. From here the left section of the Battery was moved back to Shinawari while the right section stayed on at Khorapa in the Orakzai Tirah till 2nd December to take part in the subsequent operations for the capture of Sampagha Pass, Arhanga Pass and other operations carried out by the Tirah Expeditionary Force.

On 2nd December the left section joined up with the right at Khorapa and the entire Battery accompanied the force to Khanki Bazar, returning to Shinawari on the 6th of December. The Battery continued to remain in the Upper Miranzai till 12th February 1898 and then moved to Samana where heavy snow and severe cold was encountered. The Campaign ultimately came to an end in April 1898 and the Battery returned to Jammu on the 29th of that month.

The Ist Kashmir Mountain Battery had acquitted itself extremely well during the Tirah operations which fact is amply borne out by the remarks of Lieut Mac Munn in his special report to the C-in-C Kashmir. The report in part reads as follows:

" I cannot speak too highly of Commandant Khajoor Singh and the conduct of all ranks, more specially the right section commanded by Jamadar Balwan Singh. The following NCOs I consider most execellent soldiers and should recommed that they may be informed of your approval of their conduct :- Kote Havildar Finoo, and Havildars Atta Mohammad, Ram Singh, Daya Ram and Moti Singh.

" I may add that for some months No I Kashmir Mountain Battery was the only Mountain Battery on the whole Kohat-Kurram

Frontier; a satisfactory proof of the value attached to its services".

For this work Commandant Khajoor Singh received the thanks of General Sir William Lockhart, General Officer Commanding the Tirah Expeditionary Force. Medals were issued to all ranks who took part in the Tirah expedition.

QUEEN VICTORIA'S DIAMOND JUBILEE

In 1897 the British celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. The celeberations were most gorgeous and staged as a Pageant of the Empire; recognised to be the most powerful in the world. Risaldar Major Sunit Singh was deputed to represent the Kashmir Imperial Service Corps at the celebrations that took place in England. On this occasion the Governor General in Council conferred honours on selected officers of the Imperial Service Troops who had distinguished themselves in the various fields of activity. Among the Kashmir ISC Generals Nihal Singh and Sohanu were admitted to the Order of British India Ist class with the title of 'Sardar Bahadur' in recognition of the admirable services rendered by them in connection with the administration of the ISC. Risaldar Major Sunit Singh and Commandant Khajcor Singh were admitted to the 2nd class of the order of British India with the title of 'Bahadur' for distinguished services rendered by them.[48]

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48. Administrative Report 1897-98.

CHAPTER IV

YEARS OF PEACE

Soon after the military promenade in Tirah, signs of unrest appeared in Malkand area of the North West Frontier. The State Council once again offered to help the British with the services of the Ist Mountain Battery and the Ist Kashmir Infantry (Rathu Pratap). The Government of India, however, while appreciating the loyal gasture, did not feel the necessity for utilising the offer. The trouble on the Frontier was followed in 1899 by the Boer War in Africa where the British were involved in a conflict with the Transval Republic-Orange Free State alliance. On Britain's refusal to withdraw troops from Tansval, its forces were besieged at Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking by superior Boer army. Reinforcements were required to be sent for the relief of the besieged British troops at these places and in this the Mahraja of Kashmir found an opportunity for making another offer of the services of his troops towards the British cause. It had, however, been decided by the British that none other than troops of Great Britain and her Colonies in Africa would be employed in their fight with the Boers. Consequently the Majaraja's offer of troops was politely declined. His Highness in Council there offered all the horses and mules in his army, fully equipped, for service in Afriza. This offer was accept to the extent of utilisation of 50 fully equipped and trained horses. These were despatched to Africa on 16 January 1900 to join the British reinforcements under ~~Roberts and~~ Lord Kitchener for the relief of Mafeking. The horses were accompanied by NCOs and men of the Kashmir Lancers, Body Guard Cavalr and Horsed Artillery whose work during the two and half years compaign in South Africa, was appreciated by none other than Lord Kitchener h himself.[1] After peace was restored through the Treaty of Vereeniging in May 1902 the J&K men and animals returned to the State.

1. J&K Administrative Report for the year 1902-03 AD

The token participation of the State Force in the Boer War apart, the beginning of the 20th century ushered in a period of peace for the State Force, which was to last for the next thirteen years or so. It was nevertheless a period packed with activity connected with training and ceremonials. The period provided the State Force with opportunities not only for further improving its efficiency but also for making an occasional display of the high standards so achieved.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

As a culmination of the movement towards the federation of the five colonies in the region, the Commonwealth of Australia was to come into being on Ist January 1901. The Government of India decided to send a contingent from India to participate in the military ceremonials which were to be performed in Australia in celebration of the event and asked the J&K State to depute a party from its Imperial Service regiments of infantry to form part of the Indian Contingent. Accordingly a party of two Subedars, three Havildars, one Naik and two sepoys from the Kashmir Imperial Service troops was detailed to proceed to Sydney towards the end of 1900. Subsequently Major General G A Trench, Commanding New South Wales military forces, in a letter to the Adjutent General India, appreciated the appearance and behaviour of the troops and considered their attendence at the celebrations to be of great benefit to the unity of the Empire.[2]

As an interesting side-light to the event, mention may be made of the 'Praschit' (repentence) ceremony that was performed by the men, who had proceeded to Australia, on their return to the State. The ceremony in atonement of the advertant (out of complusion under service condition) or in-advertant deviation from the Hindu way of life during the period they had been overseas was performed under the guidance of the Dharamarth department. An expenditure of Rs. 675/- was

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2. Jammu Archives Mil Block B-2-900 A G Brauch file No Nil of 1900

incurred on the ceremony which was re-appropriated by the State Government after approval for the same had been obtained by from the British Resident.[3] This was the first time the troops had been overseas (except for the visit of Risaldar Major Sunit Singh to England in 1898) and probably some religious controversy had been set off. There is no record of this ceremony having been performed for other troops proceeding overseas hereafter.

CORONATION OF KING EDWARD VII

Queen Victoria passed away on 22 January 1901 and while the accession of Edward VII took place two days after her death, the formal Coronation was withheld probably because of Britian's involvement in the Boer war. After the war was over it was celebrated in England in the form of resplendent affair in June 1902. A contingent of the Imperial Service Troops drawn from all the major states of India was sent to London to take part in the ceremonial parade. The J&K detatchment forming part of the contingent consisted of 6 Officers, 8 NCOs and 9 Sepoys; the Army Headquarters contributing one Officer (~~Lt Col~~ Lieut Colonel Bhag Singh), the Ist Infantry 2 Officers, 3 NOCs and 5 Sepoys, the ~~Second~~ 2nd Rifles one Officer 2 NCOs and 4 Sepoys, Ist J&K Mountain Battery 2 Officers and 2 NCOs while the Kashmir Tanncers provided just one NCO.[4]

The conduct and hearing of all ranks forming the contingent of the Imperial Service Troops from India won the good opinion of the Secretary of State for India as also of other members of His Majesty's Government in general. The Inspector General of Imperial Service Troops in India while conveying the remarks made by the Secretary of State, made a special reference to the excellent services rendered by ~~Lt Col~~ Lieut Colonel Bhag Singh and Jemadar Kour Singh. Captains Walson and

3. Jammu Archives Mil Block B-10-of 1901- A G Branch file No Nil of 1901.
4. Administrative Report for the year 1902-03

Denison who accompanied the contingent also reported that our men carried out the duties entrusted to them with "the greatest tact, ability and energy".[5]

The Delhi Durbar

In India the Coronation was celebrated in the form of a Durbar at Delhi during December 1902 to January 1903. The occasion that necessiated concentration of a large number of troops at Delhi was utilised by the army authorities in holding manoeuvres on a large scale between Ambala and Delhi during the weeks preceedings the Durbar. It was, in fact, the first time that an opportunity had been afforded for a large portion of the army in India, to make a practical application of the principles of war at the higher level in the light of the lessons learnt during the war in South Africa and this was done under the watchful eye of Lord Kitchener, the hero of the Boer War, who acted as the Director General and the Empire-in-Chief of the great military exercise. Heavy artillery in India (30 Pounders, 6 inch and 5 inch guns) were also exercised for the first time during this manoeuvre. A total of three infantry Divisions two cavalry divisions, a sizeable part of the corps of artillery, and a good number of the Imperial Service Troops took part in the mock war.[6]

The J&K portion of the Imperial Services Troops contingent, which was afforded the opportunity to take part in the exercise, consisted of 53 men of the Kashmir Lancers, 237 men of the Ist Mountain Battery and 412 men of the Raghunath Pratap.-. The State Band and some men of the J&K Medical corps were also included in the J&K Contingent.[7] The exercise was two sided, with troops being divided

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5. Ibid
6. History of the Delhi Comonation Durbar 1903 (Jammu Archieves AR No 1027)
7. Ibid

The exercise was two sided, with troops being divided into the Northern and Southern armies, which were to oppose each other as part of the exercise. For imparting training in staff work State Officers were attached to the various formation headquarters in the two armies. Of the J&K Officers, ~~Lt Col~~ Lieut Colonel Khajur Singh Bahadur and Major Raghubir Singh were attached to the staff of 5 Infantry Brigade of 2 Infantry Division which formed part of the Northern Army, while Majors Gauri Nandan and Abdullah Khan were attached to the staff of a brigade under the Southern Army. All the four officers performed well and were favourably reported upon by their respective formation commanders.[8]

On the basis of the reports that he received, the Inspector General Imperial Service Troops expressed, in general terms, great satisfaction at the performance of the Imperial Service Troops during the manoeuvres. He commended the great spirit, smart turn out, soldierly bearing and excellent behaviour of all. The Inspector General felt that the Imperial Service movement had by their conduct proved its value to the Empire. This general appreciation apart, the J&K troops earned some individual praise also. Commencing on the performance of the Ist J&K Mountain Battery which was part of the Native Mountain Artillry Brigade of the Northern Army Colonel Keene, DSO, who commanded the Brigade during the exercise had the following to report :-

> "Their discipline on the march and in camp was excellent, the mules were in capital condition and of good class; some indeed were ideal mules for mountain battery work, low and cobby and of particularly good make and shape. The work in the field was well performed..... the men generally seemed to

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8. Administrative Report for the year 1902-03 AD

know their fire discipline.... I am of the opinion that the Battery is well trained and fit to take its place alongwith similar batteries of the Regular Army."[9]

After the Army manoeuvres, the Delhi Durbar itself was a splendid affair. Each state had set up its camp for its participants in the allotted area. The census of the main or central camp showed a population of some 12,983 persons including over 12000 European guests and a sprinkling of 160 odd Indian and other Asiatic invitees. To facilitate movement of guests and participants a special two and a half feet gauge railway, seven miles in length was laid between the main camps and the city as also between them and the Durbar Amphitheatre. The camp of the Maharaja of Kashmir lay between three and four miles to the north-west of the vicregal residence. The camp in its picturesqueness and in the luxury and profusion of its appointments was characteristic of the beautiful valley, which it represented. The main feature of the camp was the magnificient Durbar tents that were made in the time of Maharaja Ranbir Singh and used at the Delhi assemblage in 1877. The tents were made of the finest 'Pashmina' spun like a Kashmiri shawl and were drapped inside with old Kashmiri shawls of a kind that were rarely, if evern, seen outside Kashmir itself, while the floor was covered with carpets of the finest gold embroidery. Some of the tents were hung entirely with very rare furs.[10]

The Maharaja was accompanied at Delhi by his brother Raja Amar Singh who had taken over as the Commander-in-Chief of the J&K Army after the death of Raja Ram Singh in 1898. Raja Amar Singh had incidently been one of Lord Lyttons pages at the Imperial Assemblage in 1877. On the present occasion his son Mian Hari Singh

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9. Ibid
10. History of the Delhi Coronation Durbar 1903

was given this honour. The others accompanying the Maharaja included the two governors of Jammu and Kashmir provinces, Raja Kedar Chand of Chenani, the Raja of Poonch, the Mir of Hunza Raja Sikandar Khan, Mir of Nagar Raja Alidad Khan, the Governor of Yasin, Raja Shah Sultan of +Astore, Raja Mir Baz Khan of Punial and some headmen from Chilas. Including the retainers and menials, His Highness' following numbered some 1400 persons which included 170 rank and file of the 2nd Kashmir Rifles who performed escort and guard duties at the Kashmir Camp. The transport element of the State Camp comprised 8 elephants, 8 camels over 330 horses and 100 carriages.[11]

All the troops in camp (about 39600 in all) paraded in review order for the Durbar ceremonial. The two divisions of infantry which included thirteen battalions marched to the ground on that day and formed up in line. This solid mass of infantry was flanked on its right by the corps troops, while on its left flank stood the Imperial Service Infantry cconsisting of seven ballations.[12]

On 8th January 1903 the troops were reviewed by His Excellenc the Viceroy. The Parade Ground lay 3/4 of a mile norther of village Azadpur and about midway between the Durbar Amphitheatre and the Shalimar Gardens. Close at hand was the battle-field of Badli-ki-Sarai where a pitched battle had been fought between the loyalists and the mutineers over four decades ago in 1857. 50,000 spectators witnessed the grand march-past during which several of the ruling chiefs were on parade at the head of their Imperial Service contding ents. Raja Amar Singh commanded the J&K contingent on in his capacity as the Commander-in-Chief of his State Force. He first led past the J&K Mountain Battery which formed part of the Native Brigade of Mountain Artillery alongwith the Quetta and

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11. Ibid

12. Ibid

Peshawar Mountain Batteries. He then rode at the head of the Kashmir infantry contingent under ~~Lt Col~~ Lieut Colonel Sardar Samunder Khan which formed part of the Imperial Service Infantry Brigade. The parade was a grand military spectacle which produced a marked affect on the spectators. The smart turn out and soldierly bearing of the Kashmir troops was highly commended by the Inspector General Imperial Service Troops. The State Band which, besides playing at two public functions, took part in the review and earned special words of praise. It was reported to have performed "excellently well and went so well with the Patiala band that it did much to make the Review a success".[13]

The coronation celebrations were also held locally at Srinagar on Ist January 1903. The Assistant Resident held a Durbar at the Pologround Srinagar, at the end of which the State troops present paraded ceremoniously.[14]

As part of the conferment of coronation honours, the Governor General in Council was pleased to appoint Major General Farman Ali Khan to the 2nd Class Order of British India with the title of Bahadur.[15]

VISIT OF THE PRINCE OF WALES

In the next few years after the Delhi Durbar, no other event of such great significance took place. There were, however, three important visits by high dignitaries during which the State Army was involved. First, in 1904, His Excellency Lord Ampthill paid a visit to Kashmir and then in the following year the Viceroy of India visited Jammu. On both the occasions escorts and Guards of honour were provided by the Kashmir ISC infantry while salutes

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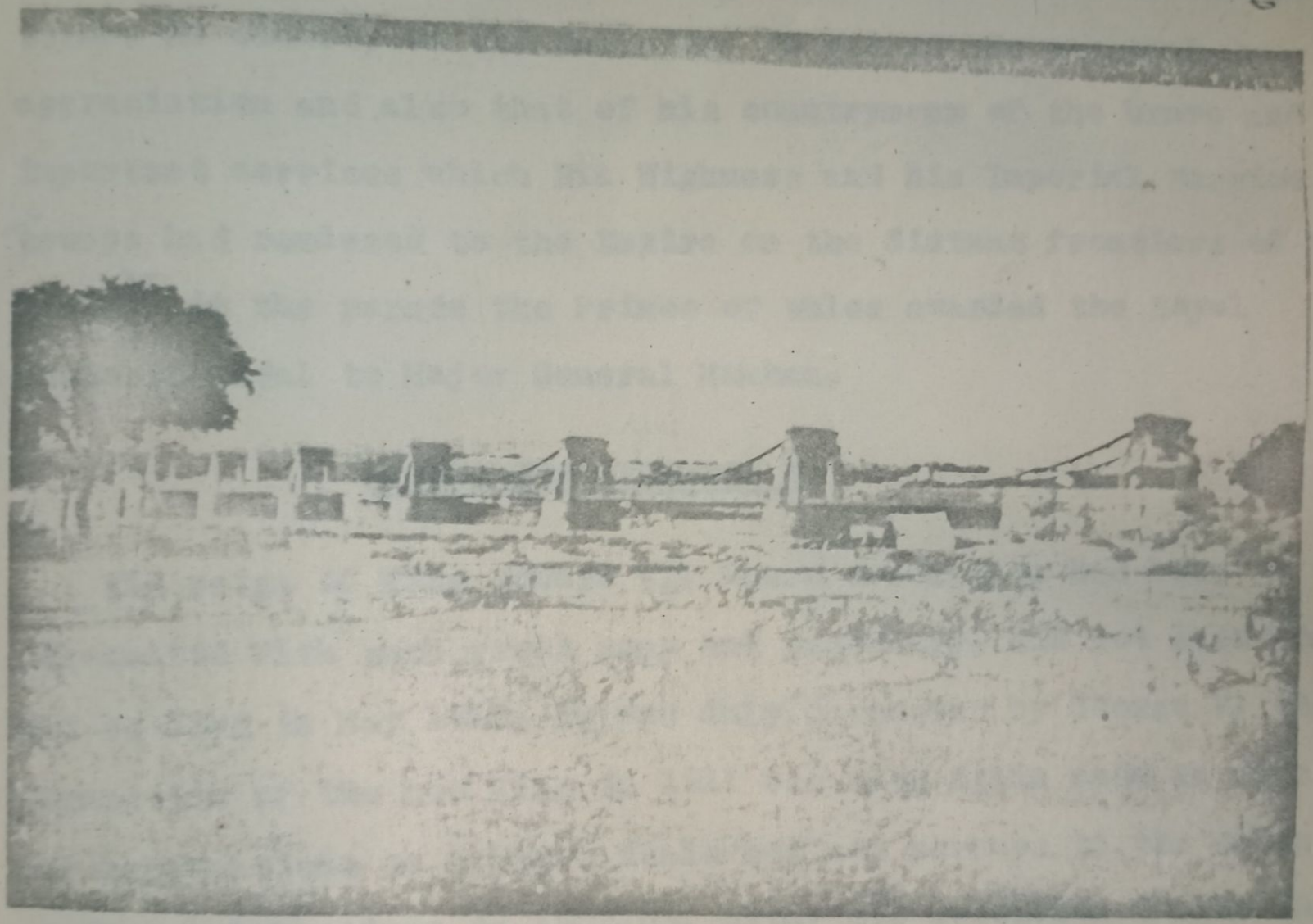
13. Administrative Report of the year 1902-03
14. History of the Delhi Coronation Durbar 1903
15. Administrative Report for the year 1902-03

1905



Tawi bridge at Jammu 1900 AD

were fired by the Garrison Battery. The visit of the Prince of Wales to Jammu the same year was, however, a much bigger affair with a greater involvement of the State troops. Besides providing the usual Guards of Honour, cordon of guards and escorts and the firing of gun salutes by the Mountain Battery and the Horsed Artillery, a big military function was arranged which included - March Past by troops. In reply to His Highness' address, the Prince referred to the Imperial Service troops of the State in eulogistic terms. He wished, on the occasion, to record his personal appreciation and also that of his countrymen of the brave and important services which His Highness and his Imperial Service troops had rendered to the Empire on the distant frontiers of this State.[16] At the parade the Prince of Wales awarded the Royal Victoria medal to Major General Makhan.

CORONATION OF KING GEORGE V

The reign of King Edward VII whose coronation had been celebrated with such great pomp and pageantry, did not last long and he died in May 1910. He was duly succeeded by George V. The Coronation of the new King in 1911 was once again made an occasion for celebrations on a large scale but not, perhaps, to the extent of similar celebrations in 1902-03. After his accession to the throne King George V paid a visit to India in December 1911. A grand Durbar was held in Delhi on 12 December to mark the occasion. Four companies of the Raghu Pratap Battalion were detailed for escort and other duties at Delhi during this Durbar. 30 men of the J&K Sappers and Miners were detailed to assist in the setting up of the State Camp for the Durbar. The State Band was also

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16. Administrative Report of the year 1905-06 AD

detailed to Delhi and was highly spoken of by all concerned. It is interesting to note that the Ist Kashmir Infantry (Raghu Pratap) was specially mentioned in the Indian Army Headquarters Railway Concentration Report for good entraining and detraining drills.[17]

In connection with the coronation the following honours were conferred on the officers of the Imperial Service Corps:-[18]

Order of British India Ist Class-	Major General Farman Ali Khan and Colonel Khajur Singh.
Order of British India 2nd Class-	Major Balwan Singh (First Battalion) Major Durga Singh (Second Battalion)
Grand Commander of the Indian Empire	His Highness Maharaja Pratap Singh.

SOME OTHER VISITS

The Viceroy and Lady Hardinge paid a visit to the Kashmir Valley in October 1912. One squadron of the Kashmir Lancers and two companies of the Ist Kashmir Infantry were detailed for escort and guard duties. The 4th Battalion (Raghunath) provided the escorts and guards when the C-in-C Indian Army paid a visit to Srinagar in 1913.[19]

OTHER ACTIVITIES[20]

At the start of the period under review in 1898, the total strength of the State Force was 7142 all ranks. The disbandment of the 3rd Battalion (Ram Ranbir) and the 6th Battalion (Raghubir) had been completed and the Imperial Service Corps which continued to be

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17. Administrative Report for the year 1911-12
18. Ibid
19. Administrative Report for the years 1912-13 and 1913-14.
20. All information under this heading is based on annual J&K Administrative Reports for the period from 1897 to 1913 unless otherwise noted.

organised in two Brigades- the Gilgit Brigade and the Jammu Brigade- commanded in rotation by Generals Jagat Singh and Suram Chand consisted of the following :-

One Squardron Lancers

Nos I and 2 Mountain Batteries

Ist Kashmir Infantry (Raghu Pratap)

2nd Kashmir Rifles (Body Guard)

4th Kashmir Rifles (Raghunath)

5th Kashmir Light Infantry (Ram Gole) ? or (Ramgole)

The Regular Army also continued to be organised into the Srinagar Brigade and the Jammu Brigade (Raghular) each being commanded in rotation by Generals Vijay Singh and Punjab Singh. The Infantry battalions of the Regular army had now been numbered; Fateh Shiv Ji becoming No 7, the Suraj Gorkha No 8 and the Rudrar Shivnabh ~~Nath~~ as No 9 Battalion. Besides these Infantry battalions the Regular army Comprised of the Body Guard Cavalry, the Horsed Artillery, the Garrison Battery and the State Band.

The Army HQ functioned under the Commander-in-Chief which appoint was held by Raja Amar Singh since the death of his brother Raja Ram Sing in 1898. He held the State Rank of a General and was assisted in his work by his two Principal Staff Officers, the Adjutant General and the Quarter Master General, which appointments were held by Generals Nihal Singh and Sohanu respectively. As already noted Major ET Gastrel functioned as the Military Advisor to the Kashmir Government in additon to his duties as the Chief Inspecting Officer. This post was ablished in the year 1900 and the office transferred to the Army Headquarters. The Departments functioning under the Army Headquarters were the Medical, Veternary, Military Stores and Forts Departments. Captain A G Payton held the post of the Inspecting Officer Cavalry, Lieutinant G F Mac Munn DSO, that of Inspecting Officer Artillery and Major Medley as the Inspecting

Officer Gilgit.

In 1899 occurred the death of General Jagat Singh necessitating adjustments in appointments. General Nihal Singh took over No 2 IS Brigade at Jammu while Lt Col Farman Ali was promoted General to take over as the Adjutant General. Another chain reaction of promotions and transfers was set off when General Suram Chand retired in 1901 after putting in 40 years of distinguished service. General Bijai Singh took over as GOC No 1 IS Brigade at Gilgit and Colonel Kharak Bahadur was promoted General to take over the Srinagar Brigade. General Bijay Singh, however, died the next year and General Sohanu was given Command of the Gilgit Brigade while Colonel Bhag Singh was promoted to the rank of the General to occupy the post of the Quarter Master General. Later when General Sohnu also died in 1905 Lt Col Makhan was promoted General to take over the Gilgit Brigade.

When Raja Amar Singh died in 1909, the only male member in the Royal family other than the Maharaja himself, was Mian Hari Singh, son of Raja Amar Singh. Hari Singh was, however, at that time a minor; being just 14 years old. The British, therefore, objected to his being appointed the Commander-in-Chief at that tender age, as proposed by the Maharaja. They instead proposed that the function be being performed by a council (that could be nominated by His Highness himself) duly advised by a British Officer loaned from the Indian Army. Maharaja Pratap Singh stuck to his guns and refused to be denied the privilege of either being himself the Commander head of his army or being able to appoint a member of his family as its Commander-in-Chief. For once th British yielded to the wishes of the Majaraja, who remained adamant on the issue, and allowed the 14 years old Prince to take over as the Commander-in-Chief State Force; the Maharaja himself looking after the job tillk his nephew completed his education. The post of the Military Advisor was, however,

revived and Major Rose who was then the senior Inspecting Officer, was appointed to the post. One Assistant Inspecting Officer was provided to relieve Major Rose of matters relating to the training of the ISC. The duties of the Military Advisor were now laid down in black and white probably to ensure that he did not unduly inferfere in the work of the Commander-in-Chief.[21]

By the end of 1913 the two IS Brigades were being commanded by Generals Farman Ali (Ist Brigade) and Khajoor Singh (2nd Brigade) while the Srinagar and Jammu Brigades of the Regular Army were under the Command of Generals Bhag Singh and Bhagwan Singh Thappa respectively. General Samundar Khan was the Adjutant General and Colonel Anant Ram held the appointment of Quarter Master General, which had since been down graded.

Routine Activity

During the sixteen years of peace from 1898 to 1913, the troops mainly performed static and garrison duties. The two IS Battalions of the Ist Brigade at Gilgit manned posts at Astore, Bunji, Rattu, Chilas, Yasin, Gupis, Chalt, Nomal and Aliabad. They were relieved by the battalions of the 2nd IS Brigade every two years. The two year relief cycle was not very economical or convenient for the Government, as much time was spent by the troops in moving to and fro Gilgit. In fact it took two months going to and another two months coming back from Gilgit. Added to this absence from duty were four months of furlough at the end of the Gilgit tenure, to which all troops were authorised. The arrangement was, however, continued, as a short tenure at Gilgit proved popular with the troops.*

The Regular infantry battalions took turns between Jammu and Srinagar; one battalion remaining at Jammu while two battalion

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21. Jammu Archives Chief Political No 66/F-227-1910

* For making the tenure in Gilgit longer, the British suggested that the troops be allowed to take their families to Gilgit. This was turned down by the State Army HQ on the grounds that this would interfere in the performance of duties by the troops.

Maharaja Shri Pratap Singh with Some Senior Officers

Sitting L to R Generals Bhag Singh, Punjab Singh, Tarman Ali, Raja Shri Amar Singh C in C, His Highness Child prince Hari Singh.

1st Kashmir Mountain Battery on parade 1905

formed part of the Srinagar Brigade. The battalions of the Srinagar Brigade took turns in providing garrisions for Skardu, Leh, Bandipur, and Gilgit. The Garrison Battery at Srinagar had its detachments at Skardu, Dras, Leh, Muzaffarbad and Jammu. The Body Guard Cavlry moved to Srinagar during summer and returned to Jammu during winter every year; the move being syncronised with that of the Durbar. The State Band also moved to Srinagar and Jammu with the Durbar, sending a detachment to Gulmarg during summer for the benefit of the European tourists.

Accommodation

Much effort was made during this period to improve the living accommodation of the troops. As a result of these efforts good barracks had come up by the end of 1913 both at Gilgit as well as the out posts under the Agency. At Jammu the Satwari Cantonment was coming up fast and the troops that orginally lived in various small 'chownis' spread all over the city and the suburbs such as at Ajaib Ghar, Haveli Durga Singh Purani Mandi, Kachi Chowni, Jogi Gate, Ghumat, Begum Haveli Bari Brahmana etc. were gradully moved to the new Satwari Cantonment. As a matter of the fact all IS troops stationed at Jammu had moved to their new barracks by the end of 1913. However, the priority being given to the IS troops, some of the 'Regulars' were yet to find a place at Satwari and continued to live in the old barracks in the town. The mounted officers of the army posted at Jammu, lived in quarters specially constructed for them at the back of the Ajaib Ghar (the present new Secretariate area).

As the troops in Srinagar were 'Regulars' only, last priority for the construction of accomodation here was accorded and the troops continued to be accommodated in old little 'chownis' such as Batmaloo Shergarhi, Hapt Chinar, Bandooki Chowni Amirakadal, Waris Khan Chowni etc., the main military camp being at Batmaloo. The Cavalry was

located in the Doodh Ganga area where new accommodation for it was subsequently constructed. A portion of the Artillary Depot was located at Rakh Brah due to availability of fodder for the mules.

Recruitment

There appears to have been no fixed class composition even in the IS Infantry inspite of continuing efforts for fixing proportions of different communities in each battalion. ~~continuing~~. To get an idea of the various castes that were recruited in the IS Infantry the caste return of these battalions for the year 1901[22] is reproduced below :-

(a) Ist Kashmir Infantry (Raghu Pratap)

(i) Hindu Dogra	- 551
(ii) Muslim Dogra	- 120
(iii) Pawadias	- 15
(iv) Gorkhas	- 2
(v) Punjabi Hindu	- 2
Total	690

(b) 2nd Kashmir Rifles (Body Guard)

(i) Hindu Dogras	- 356
(ii) Gorkhas	- 327
(iii) Kamaonis	- 6
(iv) Garhwalis	- 6
(v) Punjabi Hindu	- 2
Total	697

(c) 4th Kashmir Rifles (Raghunath)

(i) Hindu Dogra	- 345
(ii) Gorkhas	- 234
(iii) Kumaonis	- 17
(iv) Punjabi Hindu	- 7
Total	703

22. Jammu Archives Mil Block 'B'-34-1901 file No 8.

(d) 5th Kashmir Light Infantry (Ram Gole)

(i)	Hindu Dogra	- 226
(ii)	Muslim Dogra	- 226
(iii)	Gorkhas	- 213
(iv)	Kumaonis	- 14
(v)	Punjabi Hindu	- 24
	Total	703

It has been noted earlier that within the first few years of the formation of the Imperial Service Corps, the British had taken on the responisbility for the recruitment of all the Gorkhas required for the Corps. This obligation was being fulfilled by their Gorkha recruiting organisation at Gorakhpur. It appears that the British Recruiting Officer was being partial and while he sent the best Gorkhas to the Indian Army only the left over was passed on to the State. He also tried to palm off Indian Gorkhas to the State for which their was no demand. This was taken serious note of by the State Council and while ruling that no Indian Gorkhas would be accepted, it authorised the direct recruitment of Napali Gorkhas for the State Force by its own recruiting party. Consequently a recruiting party from the Body Gurad was sent to Nepal in 1898-99 and 127 Gorkhas, considered to be the best the State had every received, were recruited direct by this party. Thereafter recruiting parties from the State visiting Nepal become a regular feature. A recruiting party was also sent to the United Provinces (Agra and Oudh) in 1909-10 for enlisting purbias for the 'Regular' Army.

The other recruits for the army came from within the State and there appears to have been no derth of volunteers for recruitment. As a matter of fact there was a large number of soldiers on the supernumerary list that had to be absorbed and as such there was hardly any need for fresh recruitment as long as the list remained. This arrangement quite naturally prevented enrolment of young men

into service and every effort to clear the list was made. The list was finally closed in 1898 whereafter no new admissions to it were p permitted. The 400 men that still remained on the list were subjecte -ed to medical examination and all those who were found unfit by the board were discharged. The medically fit were then taken on a separate roll and used for filling vacancies as and when they arose. However, inspite of the efforts to keep the number on the reserve rolls down it swelled once again in 1900 when the ~~Hojrse~~ Horse Artillery was disbanded and all its men had to be taken on the supernumerary list. It was perhaps not before 1909-10 that the list got cleared after all those who could not be absorbed were sent on compulsory pension with gratuity. The rates of pension and gratuity were increased to prevent disaffection among troops. Fresh recruitment for the 'Regular' army was started only after the supernumerary list was commpletely exhausted.

While the training of recruits of the Regular army formed the responsibility of the units to which they were posted, special depots for the initial training of recruits of the ISC Artillery and Infantry were established at Satwari. Artillery Depot was established in 1902 and the Infantry Depot in 1906. As noted earlier the section of the Artillery Depot dealing with mules was located at Rakh Brah in Srinagar to solve the fodder problem. As the capacity of these depots was limited, ISC Infantry deficiencies were sometimes made up through transfers from the Regular infantry battalions. This was resorted to, particularly, when the deficiencies were required to be made up without loss of time, as an operational necessity. To facilitate such transfers the Fateh Shivji, Suraj Gorkha and Rudar Shivnabh were reorganised as Line, Rifles, and Light Infantry regiments respectively.

Education
~~The Cadet School~~

Under the Indian system of functioning, education of soldiers was never considered to be of any consequence. It was infact even

considered to be of any consequence. It was infact even considered antagonistic to good soldierly qualities and more often than not remained a matter for redicule. This was also the case with the state Force before their reorganisation on the European pattern. With the change in the pattern of functioning also changed the type of education that was required of a soldier. Consequently even the little education that the state soldier possessed proved to be of little use to him under the changed environment. The lack of the right type of education adversely affected the efficiency, particularly of the Non-Commissioned Officers. To overcome this drawback in the army a Cadet School was established in 1906 wherein boys of young ages, mostly sons of serving personnel and ex-servicemen, were enrolled and given proper education so that they may ultimately take over as Non Commissioned Officers in the Imperial Service Corps. Within a few years the cadet school started sending its pupils to the various regiments as prospective Non Commissioned Officers (NCOs) from where they could even be promoted as commissioned officers. Several of these cadets were sent to the regiments of the Indian Army for training before being absorbed in own regiments.

In order to improve the standard of education of existing NCOs and men Regimental Schools were organised in all battalions in 1901, but from the records it appears that most officers commanding battalions, traindd on old lines, took little interest in the education of their men. Some of themin fact even opposed it and employed the school masters as office clerks. The Commander-in-Chief Raja Amar Singh, however, took personal interest in the matter and came heavily on the defaulting commanding officers. The movement gradually picked up when the Quarter Master General at the Army Headquarters was made incharge of education in the army and by the end of 1913 there appears to have been a marked improvement in the education standard of the NCOs.

Strangely inspite of the great shortage of good NCOs in battalions 15 NCOs from the Imperial Service Corps were transferred to the 40th ~~NCOs from~~ Punjab Infantry (probably newly raised) in 1901-02. Even more strange is the fact that all these NCOs belonged to the 4th Battalion (Raghunath) the State of whose NCOs had been adversely reported upon by the Military Advisor two years earlier.

Re-organisation and Re-armament

In 1901-02 a decision was taken to replace the Martini Henry rifles in the infantry battalions (IS) with Lee Metford rifles. Initially 50 such rifles were received for training purposes. In the Cavalry also the Martini Henry carbines were replaced. The swords of the Lancers were abolished in 1902-03. The Regulars continued to be armed with the Enfield and Martini Henry rifles/ carbines. The J&K Mountain Batteries were also re-armed in 1902-03; the old 7 pounder guns being replaced with 2.5 RML screw guns ~~which~~ which had become obsolete with the Indian Army. The four 7 pounders of the 2nd ~~Mountain~~ Battery on being replaced were retained in the Gilgit Agency as fort armament in place of the earlier smooth bore guns which were in turn brought down and kept at the Hari Parbat Fort.[23]

Some reorganisation of the various units of the Imperial Servic Corps was also carried out. In 1907 the 5th Battalion (Ramgote) was disbanded and the remaining three battalions of the ISC were reorganised into 9 companies ~~in~~ each instead of the existing 7 companies ~~in each battalion~~. The strength of a battalion was thus raised to 916. The 4th Raghunath was renumbered as the 3rd Battalion. With the increase in the strength of the battalions, only one of them was henceforth located in the Gilgit Agency instead of the usual two.

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23. Jammu Archives Mil Block 'B'-~~33~~-1902 file No ~~8~~ 2 of 1902

This was some relief to the troops who were now required to service two years in Gilgit in every six years as against the earlier tenure of two years in every four years.

The Kashmir Imperial Service Artillery also underwent some re-organisation in 1908, to bring it in conformity with the organisation of the British Indian batteries. The gunner establishment was raised from 110 to 121. The followers were reduced from 55 to 27 while the mules were reduced from 140 to 118. There being only two batteries, each was required to serve in Gilgit for two years out of every four years while the infantry as we have already seen, served for two years out of every six. To compensate the artillery personnel for this extra inconvenience, the men and officers were given extra pay during their tenure in Gilgit.[24]

A case for converting the Sappers and Miners into Imperial Service troops was taken up at the beginning of the period under review but inspite of the fact that the J&K Sappers and Miners were being employed mainly on Imperial Service, the case for their conversion was turned down by the State Council probably on grounds of economy. On the other hand as part of their reorganisation the strength of the Ist and 2nd Sappers and Miners units were reduced in 1910 to 172 and 159 respectively. The following year the total number of their companies was reduced from four to three.

We have already noted how the three 'Regular' battalions, the Fateh Shivji, Suraj Gorkha and Ruder Shivnath were reorganised into the Line, Rifles and Light Infantry respectively to facilitate quick transfers from these battalions to the battalions of the ISC. The strength of each of these battalions, however, ~~continued to be around 600.~~ continued to be around 600.

The Commissioned Officers

Towards the end of 1899 the Officer ranks in the army were rationalised. Henceforth Commandants of Infantry battalions were to be Lieutenant Colonels and the Assistant Commandants, Majors. As already noted the substantive rank of Adjutant was abolished

24. Jammu Archives Mil Block 'B'-6-1908 file No 7 of 1908

in 1896-97 and the appointment was since being held by a selected, Subedars/Jamedars from among those who had passed the prescribed adjutancy test. In the Artillery the officer commanding a battery was to be a Major. The officers commanding squadrons of the cavalry were also to be Majors but in the case of the Kashmir Lancers which was only a squadron strong the Officer Commanding was made a Lieutenant Colonel; just as was the Commandant of the Body Guard Cavalry. The Commandant of the Sappers and Miners Company was henceforth to be a Major and the Superintendant fort was upgraded to Lieutenant Colonel.

Just as in the case of NCOs, lack of modern education was proving to be a great drawback with the Commissioned Officers. Much difficulty was, therefore, being faced in finding Officers suitable for promotion to the field rank. To overcome this difficulty a system of direct commission in the rank of Jamedar for educated youngmen was startedin the year 1900 or so. Mian Onkar Singh, who later rose to the rank of Brigadier, was among the first to receive such commission in 1901. Thereafter some graduates were commissioned as majors direct. Mian Janak Singh (who subsequently rose to the rank of Major General and held the appointment of the Army Minister during Maharaja Hari Singh's time) was the first such graduate to be commissioned in the rank of a Major direct in 1901. In order to ensure that Officers always remained up to date in their professional studies, which had acquired great importance under the new system, promotion examinations for officers were introduced in 1911-12.

Training

With peace and tranquility prevailing on the borders, the units could concentrate whole heartedly on their training. The officers and NCOs training was carried out through lectures, exercises and courses and classes that were run both within the State as well as in British India. The infantry-men were put through rigourous

individual training in musketry and field craft. Special stress was laid on scouting in which the men were reported to have been weak during the early years of the period being reviewed. Singnalling was another weak point with the battalions, mainly due to insufficient knowledge of English and inadequacy of equipment. Infantry signallers were subsequently issued with the complete signal equipment and through years of concerted efforts all the battallions were well up in this aspect of training by the end of 1913; the high standard attained by the Raghunath, (now the 3rd battalion), particularly, was being noted.

The J&K Gunners in the beginning showed up weaknesses in technical subjects like fuze setting and range finding. Technicalities added up further with the introduction of new guns which demanded new type of fire discipline and use of the clinometer for laying with tangent sights. The old NCOs who were not much educated found it difficult to assimilate these new ideas. However, as the education standards improved so did the technical efficiency of the gunners and by the end of 1913 both the batteries were well reported upon in this regard. These reports were earned after many years of hard training which culminated each year in annual firing. In Jammu proper artillery range was laid out at Nagrota for this purpose.

The Cavalry which was no longer a neglected arm had most of their old horses replaced by 1910. Officers and men weres often sent on courses and classes in Indian Army schools of instructions and the Kashmir Lancers as a unit took part in exercises organised by Imperial Service Lancers in Punjab. At home, stress was mostly laid on scouting and patrolling which was to form the main role of the lancers in operations requiring their employment. Map reading which initially appeared to be the main weak point of the Kashmir Lancers was paid much attention till a reasonable standard was achieved. During musketry much time was devoted to firing from horse back.

Imperial Service Rifles Meets

The standards attained in musketry could well be judged by the results that the J&K shooting teams achieved at the IS Rfiles meets held at Meerut annually. In 1899-1900 the individual Infantry Championship was won by Sepoy Kapura of the 5th Battalion(Ramgole) The Ramgoles also won the extended order shooting competition while they stood second in fire and movement. Then in 1911 the 2nd Battalion (Body Guard) won the Commander-in-Chief's shield for the third time with a record score. The same year 'A' Company of the 3rd Battalion (Raghunath) won the silver bugle presented by 'L' Company of Ist Punjab Regiment, again with a record score.

Sports Meets

As in shooting so in sports. The results at the various sports meets held in British India proved that the Dogras were second to none in endurance and atheletic activity. In 1905-06 the Ist J&K Mountain Battery represented the State in the IS Sports Meet at Patiala. It bagged the first prize in the 5 miles race and 3rd prize in one mile. In the similar Meet at Bhopal in 1909 the performance of the J&K Team was many times better. The Raghu Pratap won the cross country race and secured second positions in the Shot Put, long jump and obstacle race. The J&K gunner swept the field in one, two and thre miles races winning the first and second prizes in all these events. They also won the third prize in the 5 miles race. The Raghunaths won the 220 yards race and stood second in the 100 yards sprint. Later in 1912 the 2nd Battalion (Body Guards) had the honour of winning the over all championship with 17 points while the 2nd Battery was a close second with 16 points.

Health And Medical

Maintaining the health of the troops formed a major activity during this period as the Medical Department had to battle hard against common diseases like Malaria, dysentry and pneumonia. There

Indian Imperial Service Troops at the Quail of King George's Coronation 1912
X Colonel Gandip Singh, Kashmir Army

Imperial Service Rifles Meet Meerut 1911
X Members of the Kashmir Team
+ Lt Col Raghubir Singh Pathania, ~~[illegible]~~ 2 Kashmir Rifles

were also frequent outbreaks of epidemics such as small pox, cholera and plague against which the troops had to be protected. Diseases peculiar to the various regions were veneral and chest diseases in Kashmir and Scurvy in Gilgit.

Cholera was the commonest of all the epidemics. There was hardly a year when some cases of cholera did not occur. Most of the cases proved fatal. In the year 1900 the army suffered 37 cases at Jammu and Srinagar of whom 25 proved fatal. Next year cholera broke out among the 2nd Battalion (Body Guard) at Manasbal while it was on its march from Gilgit to Jammu inflicting 75 fatal casualties on the Battalion. This was taken very serious note of by the military authorities who set up a board of investigation, presided over by General Punjab Singh, to find out the causes of this break out even after all that was being done for the protection of the troops from this dreadful disease. The Board pointed out two main causes. One that the disease was brought to the camp by coolies who came from infected areas and two that the medicines supplied to the unit were insufficient for checking the disease from spreading and for treating such a large number of affected personnel. To ensure that such a situation did not arise again, it was ruled that ponies and camels be used by troops instead of coolies while passing through infected areas. Immediate steps were also taken to bring the medical establishment in each unit upto scale. It was further ensured that units carried sufficient quantities of medicines while on such long marches. These and other measures could not, however, prevent another out break, again among the 2nd Battalion personnel in 1903; but this time most of the affected cases could be cursed and the unit suffered only seven deaths. The epidemic was ultimately checked through unrelenting efforts of the Medical Department which ensured proper sanitation and provision of chlorinated drinking water in the three cantonments at Jammu, Srinagar and Gilgit. It

was thus that the troops remained unaffected even when the epedemic was raging in full fury in Srinagar in 1910-11. Nor was the epidemic allowed to spread to Satwari after it had found its way from Sialkot to areas adjoining the Jammu Cantonment.

Plague was also very common in those days and the epedemic invariably spread from the civil areas to the Cantonments. To prevent this, Quarantine camps were set up at Bari Brahmana and Satwari for troops coming back from leave after the spread of the epidemic in civil areas in Jammu in 1901-02. The result of the efforts made by the Medical Department to keep the troops protected during this out break was that only one case occurred and even that was cured. Plague showed up again in Jammu in the following year. This time it so scourged the town that its population had to be evacuated to camps specially set up for the purpose. An observation camp was again set up at Bari Brahmana to examine officers and men returning from the plague infacted areas at the end of their leave, before being allowed to join their units. It was, however, difficult to keep the troops isolated from the civil, as they were required to assist the police in watch and ward duties inside the city to protect the property of those who had left the town. Consequently two cases of plague occurred among the 'Regular' troops who were deputed on this duty. Luckily none proved fatal. Thereafter there was only one case in the 5th Battalion in 1905-06 and the troops remained generally immune from this epidemic for the next 8 years before the Great War.

Along with Although cholera and plague there used to be frequent out breaks of small-pox. This was checked to a great extent by the introduction of regular vaccination of troops. In all 7 cases occurred in 1909-10 of which 3 proved fatal. In 1912-13 there was a big out break of the epidemic in the entire State. Prompt measures were taken by the Medical Departmentx to prevent its spread to the troops. Even then eleven cases occurred of which four proved fatal. This number may however, be considered negligible

as compared with the total of 1338 civilian deaths that occurred in the State that year due to this dreadful disease.

Scurvy was, during the early years, very common in Gilgit and the garrison there was much afflicted by this disease but as troops began to feed themselves with fresh vegetables grown in their kitchen gardens, the disease claimed fewer and fewer victims. By the end of 1913 there was hardly any case of scurvy among the troops of the Gilgit garrison.

Malaria continued to be the dominant cause of admissions to the Military Hospitals through out the period under review; forming over 30% of the total cases. Closely connected with this disease was pneumonia. Malaria so debilitiated its victims during summer that most of them invariably caught pneumonia during the winter. These two ailments together kept a large number of troops off parade each year, even as the medical authorities battled hard to keep the figure down. Anti-malaria discipliene was enforced most strictly by commanders at all levels but it was many years before the disease was controlled to any great extent.

For other ailments troops initially preferred Ayurvedic treatment to the Allopathic of Military Hospitals. However, as the Medical Department grew up and the troop's prejudice against Allopathy diminished, more and more troops volunteered to go to hospitals when suffering from any ailment.

Lt Col J Duke took over as the superintending Surgeon J&K State Forces from Lt Col Dean in December 1898 and remained in the appointment till October 1902 when ~~Lt Col~~ Lieut Colonel D R Edward took over from him. The new 20 bedded Imperial Service Military Hospital at Satwari was opened on 29 June 1900. This hospital was now placed under charge of Surgeon Captain Durga Dutt. ~~Who was transferred from the Jammu Military Hospital~~ A new wing was added to the hospital in 1912-13 to increase its capacity from 20 beds to 40 beds. This placed the hospital accommodation at Satwari on

on a satisfactory footing. In Srinagar a military ward was opened in the Civil Hospital in 1901. The same year the system of Medical History Sheets for troops was introduced in the State Force.

Procurement and Transportation of Supplies

One of the major activities of the State army during this long period of peace was that connected with the procurment and transportation of supplied to the Gilgit area. The troops occupied posts at Astore, Bunji, Chalt, Gilgit, Nomal, Charat, Sungal, Leychu Jalipur, Bunner, Chilas and Rattu and supplies were required to be positioned at all these places; separated as they were from their base by miles and miles of trancherous terrain. Besides, every alternate year there was the extra requirement of conveyance of baggage of the relieving and the relieved troops. The total yearly requirement of supplies to Gilgit for the maintenance of troops located there worked out to about 20,700 maunds* (1904-05 figures). For this 4,500 ponies and 20 Peshawari Camels were required to be hired. During the relief year the transport requirement more than doubled, in as much as 9740 animals of all sorts had to be used for the conveyance of baggage and rations etc from Bandipur to Gilgit, as was done in 1897-98. With effect from October 1897 Captain E Bretherton, DSO, had taken over these duties from Major Yielding and he remained more than occupied with his stupendous task.

Two routes were used for reaching Gilgit. One over the Kamiri and the other over the Burzil pass. For Chilas, the Khagan Valley route across the Babusar Pass was used. The Burzil and Babusar routes were particularly hazzardous; the passes being perpetually covered with snow. In fact the Burzil Pass could be used only from 20 June to 15 September each year while Babusar Pass was negotiable for a month or so longer. In absence of proper snow boots a suitable footwear was improvised to prevent frost bite. While required to ~~much thereof~~ march through snow, each man was made to wear two

* one maund = 37.32 kg

pairs of worsted socks, over which 'putties' were carefully bound and then Kashmiri type grass (Moonj) shoes were fastened over all. For the protection of their eyes they were provided with blue or neu neutral tinted goggles.

Although the number of troops in Gilgit had been gradually reduced their maintenance was still a very costly affair. Every effort was therefore made to reduce this cost. The main expenditure was on carriage of rations and stores from Bandipur to the various posts in the Gilgit Agency. Initially the carriage rates were very high but with the improvement in the existing routes and the discovery of shorter routes, like the one to Chilas via Niat, Fasat and the Bari Passes which reduced the distance by 80 miles, the carriage rates came down from Rs. 70- per maund that it was in 1892. to just Rs. 3¾ in 1901. Local production of food items particularly wheat and meat was stepped up to reduce dependence on Kashmir for the supply of such items. As a drive towards local procurement over 7000 maunds of food stuff was collected as revenue in kind from villages in the Gilgit Agency in 1901 and this was supplied to the troops located there in. By 1904-05 the Agency was not only self sufficient in its requirement of the wheat but was also able to build up a surplus stock in Gilgit. The main producers of wheat were Yasin, Hunza and Nagar and they contributed liberally to the Military stocks. There was no rice produced in Gilgit and dependence for the supply of this item on Kashmir still remained. However, only small quantities of rice were brought from Kashmir for the sick only all the other troops being issued full rations of 1½ lbs of atta per day as against their preference for half atta and half rice. By 1901-02 the entire requirement of meat was also being locally procured from Skardu, Yasin, Ashukman and the Khagan Valley. As a matter of fact ~~as a result of~~ due to the grow more food and local Procurment drive in Gilgit only 6140 maunds of supplies were

required to be carted into Gilgit in 1901-02. The total number of ponies and camels used during the year (which was also a relief year) were 6140 and 150 respectively which was about 3450 animals less than those used during 1897-98.

Fodder for Government mules and horses stationed in Gilgit constituted a major supply item; there being a demand for over nineteen thousand maunds of it every year. Carriage of such a large quantity of fodder would have been very costly. Local procurement had its problems as there was little that the villagers could spare after meeting their own demands. Consequently fodder farms were worked at Gilgit (7½ Acres) Bunji (60 acres) Lucher (7 acres) Gonah (6 acres) and Chilas (25 acres) which together met more than half the army's demand. To further reduce dependence on local civil resources the mountain battery whose permanent location was Bunji was, more often than not, moved down to Rattu during the summer months so that the mules could freely feed on the natural grass that that grew there in abundance.

Much saving in expenditure was affected due to the improvement of routes over which the stores were required to be carried and the various measures adopted for mobilising local resources in Gilgit. The savings are evident from the fact that while the requirement of the army for ponies and camels amounted to 5206 in 1900-01 (non relief year) it was only 2010 for 1912-13 (also a non relief year). In terms of money while a saving of Rs. 6713/- was made in 1900-01 Rs. 10098/- were saved during the following year.

The mustering of the requisite number of ponies for the carriage of supplies to Gilgit could not have been an easy task. What was important was that the availability of the required number of animals had to be guaranteed during mobilisation for operations. For this purpose the owners of animals employed were made to sign agreements in 1898-99 whereby they were obliged to provide their

animals for hiring by the Government in times of need. So as to leave nothing to chance about 5000 ponies were inspected by Major Bretherton, the Officer In-charge Commissariate, in 1901-02 and branded with a broad arrow as a mark of recognition. These animals which stood earmarked for requisition by the army in times of need were regularly inspected each year and fresh ponies were branded to make up any deficiencies that may have occurred due to old age or deaths among these initially branded.

For provision of supplies to troops located in Jammu and Srinagar contract system was adopted in 1898-99 which worked well. It ensured regularity, quality and economy which the Government agencies had failed to give. While in Srinagar local procurement of supplies was no problem, Jammu often suffered from food scarcity posing, at times, considerable problem of local purchase. At times the scarcity became so acute that the relieving ISC Brigade was moved to Bandipur some months early and made to stay there to relieve the supply situation at Jammu. LikeWise the relieved Brigade was also made to stay at Bandipur for some months before returning to Jammu. One such situation arose in 1897-98 when the relieved Brigade was made to spend the entire winter months at Bandipur beforer returning to its permanent location at Jammu. The carriage of baggage of troops between Jammu and Srinagar and between Srinagar and Bandipur was the responsibility of the Kashmir Civil Transport till about 1908. As this system was not working satisfactorily contract system was adopted for the conveyance of such baggage as was being done in case of stores movement between Bandipur and the various posts of the Gilgit Agency.

First Line Infantry Transport Corps

Although the transport system was working fairly satisfactorily during these years of peace, there were apprehensions about its being able to function equally well under conditions of war or tribal

hostilities. Consequently a case for the State to maintian a troop of mules for use at the time of mobilisation was prepared as early as 1902-03. Requirement for a regiment on mobilisation was worked out to 80 mules of which 60 were required to be used for lifting essential war like stores. A proposal was therefore made for converting the existing troop of ponies with the Kashmir Civil Transport into a troop of mules and putting it entirely at the disposal of the army. It was, however, not before 1912-13 that a practical shape could be given to the proposal. In that year the Kashmir Civil Transport was reorganised for service with the ISC 18 regiments of Infantry to provide First Line Transport to these regiments on mobilisation. The transport placed at the disposal of the ISC consisted of 194 ponies and mules and 10 riding horses. It was manned by 11 combatants and 93 non combatants. This unit thus formed was designated as the Ist Line Infantry Transport Corps.

Pay and Allowances

It had long been realised that the soldier in the J&K State was poorly paid, but the burden on the exchequer caused by the large army that the State was required to maintain because of its peculiar situation, prevented the authorities from raising the pay and allowances of the troops. It was only after some reduction was made in the strength of the Army in 1897-98 that the pay and allowances of the troops could be revised. Prices of food and fodder having shot up during this period special dearness allowance was sanctioned for all ranks as under :-

Cavalry (ISC) Rs.7/- p.m. per individual

Cavalry (Regular) Rs. 6/- p.m. per individual

Infantry/Artillery (all) Rs. 1-8-0 p.m. per individual

In addition to the above good service pay at annas -/8/- after every five years of service, Rs. 1/- after 10 years, and Rs. 1-8-0 after 15 years was sanctioned for all ranks of the ISC below the rank of Jemadar.

All this time the payments to the troops were being made in the State 'Chilki' coinage. In normal times the Chilki rupee was worth annas 10 of the British Indian currency. However, in the past the purchasing powers of the Chilki rupee within the state was more or less the same as that of the Indian rupee outside. Now with the depreciation of silver the exchange value of the Chilki rupee stood at just 9 annas or even less. With this and the ever increasing economic dependence of the State on British India, the purchasing power of the chilki rupee had also greatly fallen, which completely off set the raise in pay that the troops received. It, perhaps, even amounted to an automatic reduction in pay in actual terms, when an increase was intended. This grievance of the troops was duly recognised by the Commander-in-Chief State Force, and remedial measures were taken which culminated in the replacement of the chilki with the British Indian coinage in 1897-98. Possibly the suggestion for the change over came from the British whose interest in doing away with this last remaining symbol of States independence as perhaps more political than a concern for the well being of the troops. In any case with the greater purchasing power of the Indian rupee all troops were greately benefitted financially.

The same year family pension at the rate of half of the pay drawn at the time of death was sanctioned for the heirs of those killed in action. Wound pernsions were also authorised as per Army Regulations in India.

In 1898-99 a Committee was set up to fix scales and authorisations of clothing and other regimental necessaries. The Committee recommended, besides other things, free issue of Khaki serge uniform to be worn as full dress for two years in Jammu and as winter dress for two years in Gilgit. The existing issue of free warm under-clothing was abolished. Free issue of Chapalis, socks 'Dhujjis' (discontinued after 1902-03) goggles and kit bags were

authorised to troops moving to Gilgit. All this meant a saving of about five and a half rupees to each man proceeding to Gilgit.

Inspite of the various concessions granted to him the financial plight of the state soldier continued to be miserable. The general rise in the prices of clothing equipment and rations, left little from his pay to take home. The pays of all ranks were therefore revised in 1909-10. Dearness allowance was raised sufficiently to allow a clear saving to a sepoy as under :-

Infantry and Artillry (all)	Rs. 2/- p.m.
Kashmir Lancers	Rs. 5/- p.m.
Cavalry (Regular)	Rs. 4/- p.m.

The rates of Long Service pay of IS Troops were now doubled while the pay of Officers also seems to have been raised.

To encourage retirements among those on the Supernumerary List the rates of gratuity were increased in 1899. It now ranged from 3 months pay for those with over 7 years and under 15 years service to a full one years pay for those with over 25 years of service. Subsequently the pension rules were also revised. According to the new pension scheme, sanctioned by the Maharaja in 1900, a sepoy was entitled to received Rs. 3/- as pension after 25 years service and Rs. 4/- at the end of 32 years service. Jemadars and above were now authorised 35% of the average pay drawn during the last 5 years of service, if they retired after 25 years, and 50% of their average monthly pay when ratiring after 32 years of service. These pension rules were revised once again in 1909-10 to make them more lucrative.

The Regular troops continued to remain the under dog, as only a fringe of the financial benefits granted to the Imperial Service troops ever touched the Regulars. The British appeared least bothered about these troops and the restrictions that they laid on the size of the States defence budget, left little scope for the

Maharaja and the Commander-in-Chief to do any thing for their betterment even though they were favourably inclined to help.

Bargirs[25]

The under dog among the under dog were the Jagirdar troops known as the Bargirs. For a long time their conditions of service and rates of pay remained different from those of 'Regular' troops even though they performed similar duties. Bargirs were troops that were supplied to the State by the Jagirdars in consideration of the Jagirs granted to them. As a matter of fact the number of troops to be supplied by the Jagirdar or any obligation on him to render military service himself was stipulated in the decree granting him the Jagir. For instance the Jagir of Karnah was granted to Raja Raghunath Singh of Ramkot in return for which he (and his heirs) was to supply 50 Bargirs for manning Karnah, Buraj Kiran and Sharda Ji, forts against the inroads of Kohistanis. Besides the forts, Bargirs were also employed in the Cavalry and Infantry under the 'Regular' Army. The exact number of Bargirs and how they were distributed among the units of the Regular army is not exactly known. It appears that apart from providing complete garrisons at certain forts as noted above they were formed into separate infantry battalions or rifle companies in specified units. This is evident from the fact that some battalions were distinctly named as Jagirdar battalions. Lachman Jagirdar was one such example. The other battalion, that concerns us more, is the Ruder Shivnabh which was also known as the Bargir Paltan Ruder Shivnabh till as late as 1910. No Bargir could earn his release before putting in 10 years of service.

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25. Compiled from information contained in the Administration Report of the Accountant General for the year 1909-10, Jammu Archives Mil Block A-106-1916 file no 1938 and Mil 'A' 65-1913 file no 60 m of 1913, Mil Block E-16-1925 file no 137-M-83 and Mil Block B-36-1910 AG Office file no 1 if 1910.

It was the responsibility of the Jagirdar to pay his Bargirs. As there was no binding on the Jagirdar by the State as to how much he paid to his Bargirs, he invariablyx paid them less than what the State paid to its Regular troops, and each Jagirdar paid his Bargirs differently from the other. These different rates of pay between the Bargirs and the Regular troops and among the Bargirs themselves could not have but adversely effected the morale and discipline of the Bargirs. Consequently it was decided (probably in 1890 when the Imperial Service Corps was formed) that all Bargirs be paid uniformly and at par with the Regular troops; the State paying the difference. Necessary deductions for uniform and regimental necessaries etc were made by the State before making payment to the Bargirs. The share to be paid by the Jagirdars continued to differ from Jagirdar to Jagirdar and he made this payment direct to his Bargirs with the Government having little or no control over such payments. A further change in the procedure of payment was brought about in 1910 when the State took upon itself the responsibility of affecting recoveries from the Jagirdars and making consolidated payments to all Bargirs. Quite naturally much inconvenience was experienced by the Government in recovering from such a large number of Jagirdars their share of the Bargirs pay and that too at varying rates. Besides, recoveries had also to be made from the Jagirdars on account of absence of their 'Piadas' (infantrymen) arms) and 'sowars' (horsemen) and in certain cases also for minor offences committed by them. Many times the recoveries were disputed by the Jagirdars and they ran into arrears.

In 1913 it was decided to put an end to the system of Jagirdars supplying Bargirs to the State. The Jagirdar's obligation with regard to providing soldiers for the State Army was planned to be converted into cash contribution. For this a uniform commutation rate of Rs. 7/- p.m. for every Bargir (sowar' and Rs.2/- P.m. for every 'Piada' thatm a Jagirdar was earlier required to

furnish was fixed. Under the new arrangement the Bargirs were to be authorised pensions like other soldiers of the State for which the Jagirdars share was to be 5 annas and 4 pies per Bargir per month. The scheme could not, however, be implemented immediately, due to the out break of the Great War and it was only in 1915 that the change could be made. Thereafter the responsibility for recovery of the commuted amount from the Jagirdars was transfered, to the Revenue Department. It was also from 1915 onwards that the Bargirs (as they continued be called) were authorised pensions at the same rates as applicable to the Regular troops; with Jagirdari Service to count towards pension.

Discipline

Although the British had been commenting most favourably on the State of discipline of the Dogra army under Maharaja Gulab Singh and Ranbir Singh, they were apparently not satisfied with it when they tookover the training and administration of the Imperial Service Corps. Evidently discipline there still was, but the concept had changed. All that the British had now to do was to build the new form of discipline on the solid foundations of the old. The transition need not have been painful but the British Officers went about it in a rather harsh manner; as if they were dealing with troops who had never known discipline before.

The " Rules for the punishment of Crimes in Kashmir Imperial Service Troops" which were first framed in 1890 were revised by Major Gastrel in 1897-98 to make them more effective. Discipline was, thereafter, enforced with a heavy hand, at the instance of the British Officers. In the year 1899-1900 as many as 42 Courts Martial were held, through which some offending officers, NCOs and other ranks were punished/dismissed probably to create the necessary fear of the law and to introduce the troops to the new concept of discipline. Lashes were often administered to the men for such offences as writing of anonymous letters, besides such offences

calling for dismissal. Lashes were also awarded by the Courts Martial for disobedience under the new law. The results were very satisfying to the British Inspecting Officers who in 1901 were able to report a general decrease in crime among the IS Troops.

Hard as the army authorities tried to check them, desertions from service continued unabated. In 1897-98 the State ~~Km~~ Council announced a reward of Rs. 5/- for any one assisting in the capture of a deserter or providing information thereof. There were, however, few takers of the reward and most deserters continued to remain untraced while sheltered in the hills. Those who were captured, w were punished to deter others from deserting but with little effect. Not only were there desertions among Dogra troops, but the Gorkhas also contributed largely to the number. While some Gorkhas deserted to join the Indian Army, where the pays were more attractive, most cases of desertion were from among those who could not buy the return ticket after termination of their leave due to lack of funds. The system of issue of a railway warrant (on payment) for the return journey at the commencement of leave from Jammu, that was subseqently adopted, worked well and he helped in reducing the number of desertions among Gorkhas. Average of 100 desertions a year from the IS Corps and the 'Regular' Army, never-the-less, continued right till the end of 1913. Of these not more than 20 were captured and tried in any one year.

Considerdhg the conditions under which the Regular troops worked the discipline among them may be considered to have been well maintained. They were being discriminated upon in relation to the Imperial Service troops in matters of pay, allowances, rations clothing and other necessaries but they bore it all as only Dorgras could- without raising as much as a murmur. Their discipline and good behaviour could not escape the notice of the Military Advisor to the State Forces. In his opinion, which is duly recorded (1899-1900), "no army could have shown a better spirit and truer

confidence in the headquarters than the J&K Army has with regard to the still pending question of pensions to replace the closed "Supernumerary List". He felt that the change could have given great trouble had not the troops been so disciplined. The 'Regular' Army was entirely under their own officers with the least interference from the British Officers and credit for this excellent discipline naturally goes to the State Officers. As a matter of fact the State Officers, even though side lined by the British Inspecting Officers, continued to exercise considerable control even over the Imperial Service Troops. It was primarily because of good command and control of Indian Officers that the troops were kept content even when they had reasons for not being so. In this regard mention may be made of the Command and Control exercised by Colonel Farman Ali Khan in keeping the troops quiet and satisfied during the disbandment of 3rd Kashmir Infantry which earned him much praise.

THE STATE OF PREPAREDNESS[26]

The record of inspections and reports would show that the J&K State Force took the maximum advantage of this long period of peace along the borders, in training itself not only for its perscribed role on the borders but also to be able to fight as first line troops alongside the Indian Army, in case of a bigger conflagration involving the British Empire; which was infact round the corner even though not so appreciated.

The greatest weakness of the Infantry units had been in signalling. This had to be so in view of the large number of illiterate NCOs and men in all the units. All the units had trained hard to over come this major drawback and by 1909-10 all the units

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26. All information under this heading is based on annual J&K Administrative Reports for the period from 1898-1913

had acquired a high degree of efficiency in signalling. The 3rd Battalion (Raghunath), however, received the best report. The Inspector of signalling Imperial Service Troops, in his report considered the ~~Battalion~~ signallers of the Battalion to be one of the best among the Imperial Service Troops in India, with regard to signalling efficiency.

The other handicap from which the army seems to have suffered during the early years of the period under review, was the large proportion of recruits and young soldiers in all the regiments. The large intake of recruits had been necessitated by the deficiencies in the ranks caused by the large number of casualties during the recent border wars and the general policy of retiraing old ~~men~~ and unfit personnel from units. In 1902-03 there was such a large number of recruits and young soilders in the Ist and 2nd Battalions that the Inspecting Officer Major Woodward was obliged to declare them unfit for taking the filed. Consequently the two units were put through intensive training during the annual training camps that were sepcially organised for them and within a year they were again declared fighting fit. So quickly were the units put back on the rails ~~declared unfit remained~~ that the matter of their being declared unfit remained within the family, and does not seems to habe been offically taken not of. The Commander - in- Chief india in his report for the same year expressed satisfaction at the efficiency maintained by the Imperial Service Troop. However, while congratulating the cavalry for for the improvement shown in their musetry the C-in-C expressed disappointment at the result shown by the infantry.

The following year, the Inspector General Imperial Service Troops India, made the following interesting remarks with regard to the Kashmir Imperial Service Corps, in a demi offical letter addressed to the C-in-C J&K state Force:-

"I have been much interested in seeing your second Brigade. You know what a high opinon I have of Dogras as fighting soilders

and I am very pleased with your men in both regiments. Did you notice that in the last fight in ~~somaliland~~ Somaliland? the Dogras were commanded for the best fire discipline. I hear the question of extra pay is under consideration. I do hope that you will be able to carry the question to a successful issue. It is of vital importance to have good materials in your regiments, and believe me, you will not attract them to the ranks unless the pay is raised.

"I have received excellent reports about the musketry from Major Montaigno and other Officers.

"I hope the Second Brigade regiments will very shortly receive the new rifles and am sure that when they do, their shooting will be very good.

"I have, as you know, always been able to report favourably on your valuable Imperial Service Force and it will give me great pleasure to say this year that steady improvement has been maintained.

"The Artillery Depot was a very wise move and I hope to soon hear that your infantry regiments will also be provided for in the same way"

In 1911 Brigadier FHR Drummond Inspector General Imperial Service Troops on departure from India wrote from Bombay in eulogistic terms with regard to the efficiency of the Kashmir ISC. "Proud to be associated ~~with~~ with such splendad troops many of whom have already made for themselves a great name", he remarked.

The report of ~~Lt Col [illegible]~~ Lieut Colonel J L Rose, Military Advisor to the C-in-C State Force for the year 1912-13 gives even a clearer pictures of the state of the J&K ISC on the eve of the World War I. The report reads as follows:-

"The personnel is excellent. The three battalions are commanded

by gentlemen of good standing and position, two being Dogras and one Sikh. All are keen capable officers. The Company officers are zealous and among them are several young energetic men, who in time should prove suitable for promotion to field rank. The NCOs as a body know their duties and are well trained. "The Instructions and training of recruits in the Depot has improved considerably. The men enlisted, both Dogras and Gorkhas are of good type."

The report was followed by another good report by the senior Inspector Officer in 1913-14. While grading the general standard of efficiency of units as very satisfactory, he made a special reference to the excellent feeling of "keenness and healthy rivalry" existing between units. He also greatly commanded the very good esprite-de- corps among all troops.

The General Officer Commanding Northern Army while on a visit to Kashmir in October-November 1913 was specially invited by His Highness the Maharaja to inspect troops stationed at Srinagar which were mostly the Regulars. The General was impressed by the turnout of soilders and considered "the men hardly specimen of soilders". He also commanted favourably on the equipment that was paraded before him and graded it as serviceable.

1914, the year of the Great War, thus opened with the Kashmir Imperial Service Corps in top form, fit not only as an auxilliary force, as it was intended to be at the time of its creation, but also to be empboyed in a first class European War as forward most troops, as we shall see in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

WORLD WAR I[1]

THE BACKGROUND

The annexation of Alsace and part of Lorraine by Germany after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 was largely responsible for the continued bitter hostility between France and Germany which was carried forward into the 20th Century. That the two were preparing for another bout was more or less believed by all, but none expected that the war would come, when it did, in 1914. For 20 years ~~atleast~~ no doubt, war had hung over Europe like a dark thunder cloud but its outburst had been so long delayed that many had begun to wishfully hope that the war may get indefinitely delayed. In fact even as late as June 1914 few believed that the war was just about two months away. A peace of a sort has been restored in the Balkans and a conflict between the great powers appeared, reasonably, to have been averted.

The efforts in the cause of peace were, however rendered useless by the dastardly outrage on 28th June 1914 when the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of ~~Austria-Hungary~~ Austro-Hungarian Empire was assassinated, along with his consort, in Sarajavo, the capital of Bosnia. The assassin was a young Bosnian but it soon became clear that the plot which had led to the murder had its centre in Servia. Consequently on 23rd July the Austro-Hungarian government ~~of the Austria-Hungary combine~~ sent an ultimatum to the Servian government embodying its demands which were desired to be accepted immediately and unconditionally. When Servia refused to accept the demands, Austria declared war on Servia on 28 July 1914.

Thereafter events followed one another rapidly. Russia began to mobilise her army against Austria, while Germany, having

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1. Rev EM Macphair, "Historical Background of the War" in the Indian Review War Book, GA Natesan & Co Madras 1915, pp 1-11.

assured here support to Austria, first fired off an ultimatum to Russia on 31 July, and then declared war on her on 01 August. In order to take advantage of the outbreak of hostilities in Europe for settling old scores, Germany had sent a similar ultimatum to France and without waiting for a reply invaded that country on 01 August; using Luxumburg as the spring board. Now Britian was bound to France by ties of friendship (prompted by her obsession with the concept of balance of power) and consequently was waiting for an excu excuse to join the affray on the side of France. So, when Luxumburg appealed to her for support in maintaining her neutrality, which had been violated by Germany, Britian declared war on Germany on 4 August 1914. Soon the whole of Europe was engulfed in the conflagration.

The war could not, however, remain confined to Europe alone. All European powers of consequence had colonies in Africa and Asia which automatically got involved in the war of the making of their masters. With Japan joining the beligerents the horizone was broadened further to truly make it a World War.

It is rather surprising but true that in India there was a spontaneous display of layalty for Britian at the outbreak of war and all Indian leaders, political, religious, and social, without exeeption, supported the British cause which they considered as righteous and extended whole hearted co-operation to the British war effort. This, perhaps, came as a pleasant surprise to the British who, with no internal security problem to worry about, could now use the entire Indian Army for fighting their war. It was quite evident that the war would be a long drawn out one, and that victory would be assured to the side that could sustain the vast manpower requirement the longest. With the cooperation that was now extended by the Indians the British were assured of the unhindered use of this great reservoir of manpower for the furtherence of their war aim.

Consequently Indian Army units were employed in large numbers in the various expeditionary forces that were created for meeting the German challenge on more than one front. One such front, which concerns us most, opened up in East Africa, necessiating use of Indian troops there on a large scale.

THE AFRICAN FRONT

The African front opened rather unexpectedly. There was an impression that should the war breakout in Europe there would be no fighting between the beligerants in Africa and there were good reasons for believing so. The Berlin conference of 1884-85 had declared in favour of the neutrality of the colonies in Africa. On the basis of this declaration the German foreign office opened negotiations through the American Ambassador in Berlin for securing the neutralization of this area. What prompted Germany to do so was obviously here weakness at sea. The Allies controlled the Mediterranian which had cut off the East African colony from Germany fairly effectively and this gave the British an advantage in the war that might be fought in Africa. The British naturally spurned the offer and decided to carry the war into East Africa. This despite the fact that they did not at that time have in their part of East Africa sufficient troops even to defend it, let alone carry the war into the adjacent Germany colony.[2]

Hostilities in the region first started on 8 August when two British cruisers bombarded the Germany port of Dar-es-Salam. Germany vessals and a floating dock were destroyed and a landing party from the cruisers destroyed the wireless station located on land. The Germans, who were much better on land, then ritaliated

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2. Draft History of Jammu and Kashmir Rifles produced by the Regimental Centre in 1965

by attacking and capturing the British settlement at Taveta on 15 August 1914. Simultaneously the Germans established a strong post on the main approach route into German East Africa from the British colony, and by holding them in strength Colonel Von Lettow Vorbeck, the German Commander, evidently sought, initially, to forestall the British invasion of the German colony. But once established at these places he utilised the positions for launching a series of raids on the Mombasa-Victoria railway in British territory. These raids on the MR railway, (which ran parallel to the border and was at no place more than 80 miles from it), were so boldly conceived that the British were obliged to take a serious note of them.[3]

At the commencement of these hostilities the situation in British East Africa (BEA) was precarious. The East Africa protectorate force under Lieutenant Colonel E S Ward consisted of only the 3rd Battalion of the King's African Rifles (KAR) and part of the Ist Battalion of the same regiment. In addition to these 1200 or so Regulars there were some 2000 para military troops. Within a fortnight some one thousand White settlers were brought under arms; being organised into the East African Mounted Regiment and the East African Regiment. The British strength was obviously inadequate to be able to hold out against an enemy estimated to be some to be 16000 strong. To meet the threat, therefore, orders for the mobilisation of an Indian Expeditionary Force for British East Africa were immediately issued.[4]

It was not only the Indian Army on which the British could draw to meet their requirement in Africa. There were also at their disposal the Imperial Service troops that were being maintained by

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3. Ibid

4. The Times History of the War vol I published by the Times London 1917, pp 121-160

practically all the princely states in India. In some of the States the standards attained by these troops were such as to qualify them for the honour of operating in the front line. Consequently when the various princes made offers of providing troops for the expeditionary forces that were being organised in India for fighting on the various fronts, these were gratefully accepted. The rules of the Government of India detailing the privileges and concessions to which the Imperial Service troops were entitled and laying down the proportions of the cost of such mobilization to be borne by the Government of India and the concerned state had been revised in 1897-98. Under these rules the Government of India were to bear the cost of the ammunition and explosives, renewal of field service clothing, maintenance of mobilization equipment during active service, rail transport within and outside the state, sea transport, rations to all combatants, non combatants and animals and field 'Batta' (allowance) to all troops. The state on the other hand was to bear the ordinary pay of the troops, cost of transport other than by rail and sea (which was to be borne by the British Government) and cost of initial issue of clothing and mobilisation of equipment upto complete authorisation.[5] The command and control of the troops was to be governed by the agreements which had been made between the Governor General of India and the Indian rulers of states separately in 1901-02 (see Appendix).

Maharaja Partap Singh of Jammu and Kashmir had made an order offer of three infantry battalions and one mountainh battery for service under the British. While the offer was gratefully accepted only one and a half battalions were immediately requisitioned for employment with the Indian Expeditionary Force 'B' which was being

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5. J & K Administrative Report 1897-98

organised for service in British East Africa. The state consequently earmarked the 2nd Kashmir Rifles (50% Dogra Muslim and 50% Gorkha) and four companies of 3rd Battalion (50% Gorkha and 50% Dogra Hindu) under a small headquarters, and issued orders for their mobilisation. Owing to somewhat unserviceable condition of the rifles and carbines in possession of the Kashmir Imperial Service at that time, the Government had already decided to re-arm the troops with Lee Enfield short rifles.[6] Priority was now given to the re-armament of the two battalions detailed for the service overseas.

The Indian Expeditionary Force 'B'

The Indian Expeditionary force 'B' was to compose of two Infantry brigades- the Bangalore Brigade and the Imperial Service Infantry Brigade. The Bangalore Brigade was to have four battalions (viz., 2nd battalion Loyal North Lancashire, 63rd Palam Cottah Infantry, 98 Infantry and the 10/Ist Grenadiers) while the Imperial Service Brigade was to consist of the 2nd Kashmir Rifles, 4 companies of the 3rd Kashmir Rifles, 4 comapanies of the 3rd Gwalior Infantry, and 13th Rajput; the two half battalions of J&K and Gwalior being formed into a composite battalions. Brigadier General Aitken was detailed to be the GOC of the Expeditionery Force while Brigadier General Wapshare and Colonel Tighe were to command the Bangalore Brigade and the Imperial Service Brigade respectively.[7]

Mobilisation of 2nd Kashmir Rifles under ~~Lt Col~~ Lieut Colonel Raghubir Singh and 3rd J&K Rifles (Half) under Lt Col Durga Singh which had commenced on 12th and 15th September respectively was completed by the last week of September and the two units left Jammu at the end of the month to join the Imperial Service Infantry Brigade which was scheduled to concentrate at Deolali by the Ist of October.[8]

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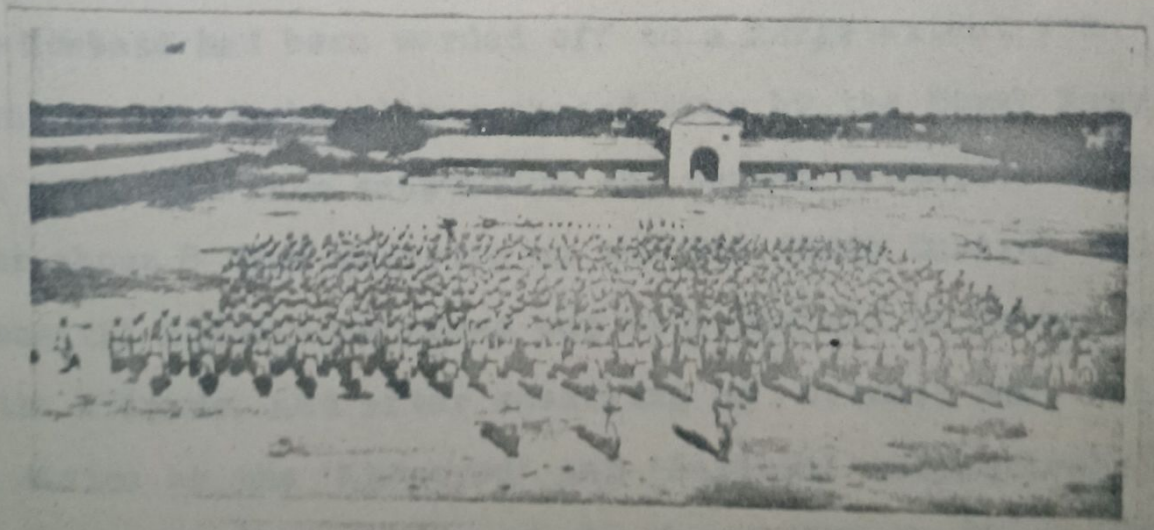
6. Jammu Archives Mil Block A-9 of 1914 file no 13-W
7. Historical Section Ministry of Defence New Delhi, Indian Expeditionary Force 'B' War Diaries (12 Sep 1914 to 01 October 1914)
8. Ibid

Lt Col Raghubir Singh OC 2nd Kashmir Rifles 1914



2nd Kashmir Rifles before departure for British India 1914

Meanwhile frantic messages were being received from East Africa for early despatch of the Expeditionary force 'B' as the situation there had become critical. Crossing the Umba river the Germans had sized Vanga during the 3rd week of September and although their advance towards Mombasa had been halted at Majerani south of Gazi and 25 miles from Mombasa, where a small British East Africa garrison had constructed defences to meet the German advance, it was quite clear that the defences would not be able to hold out for long without being reinforced. The position could not be reinforced locally as fighting was also going on around Tsavo river near mount Longido and all British East African troops were fully committed. The Expeditionary force 'B' still being in the formation stage at this time, some elements of Expeditionary force 'C' were diverted to East Africa to meet the immediate threat to Mombasa. The force consisting of half battalions each of Rampur, Kapurthala, Jind and Bharatpur states and 29th Punjabis had left Bombay for Mombasa on 20th September. These troops under Brigadier General Stewart reached Mombasa in the first week of October and were immediately moved out to strengthen various defensive positions. Before this the threat to Mombasa had been warded off to a large extent when the German cruiser 'Konigsburg' was chased away by the Royal Navy war-ships[9] and prevented from supporting the German offensive on land.

After about 8 days marrying up the 2nd (Body Gurard) and the 3rd (Raghunath) Battalions moved out from Deolali to Bombay with the rest of the Brigade, and after embarking on 9 October ~~9th~~, sailed for East Africa by the 'Khoserou' and 'Barjera' respectively on the 16th alongwith the other units of the Expeditionary force 'B'. The mobilised strength of the Kashmir units that left for East Africa was as given below :-[10]

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9. The Times History of the War vol X pp 121-160
10. J&K Administrative Report 1914-15

	Br Offrs	Ind Offrs	Other rank	Remarks
2nd Kashmir Rifles	2	22	703	Offrs incl 2 Doctors
3rd Kashmir Rifles	1	14	302	-do-

The Attack on Tanga[11]

The Force arrived off Mombasa on 31st October and without disembarking proceeded straight towards the German port of Tanga. The plan was to capture Tanga and thereby relieve enemy pressure on Mombasa. At dawn on 2nd November the force arrived off Tanga and HMS 'Fox' went in atonce to demand surrender; leaving the convoy miles out at sea. When surrender was, refused the 'Fox' returned to the convoy and took in the North Lancashires, the 61st Pioneers and 13th Rajputs for landing on the shore at dusk.

Next morning, at day break, the 13th Rajput led the advance with the 61st in support while the North Lancashires remained behind as reserves. The Rajputs were engaged by the enemny immediately outside Tanga and after some fighting were drives back under pressure from superior numbers of the enemy. The 61st battalion that was sent up in support also proved unsuccessful and both the battalions were forced to retreat in disarray. Fortunately the 'Fox' had moved into the harbour by then and commenced bombardment, due to which the enemy drew off and the units retired safely to the landing area. Here they were joined by the North Lancashire Regiment and the three took up a de defensive position, while as many units as was possible were got ashore during the few hours of ~~the~~ day light that were still available after the fiasco. ~~on 3rd November~~. Disembarkation of all the remaining units was completed by early morning on 4th November.

At noon on 4th November General Aitken launched his attack on Tanga with the units disposed as follows :-

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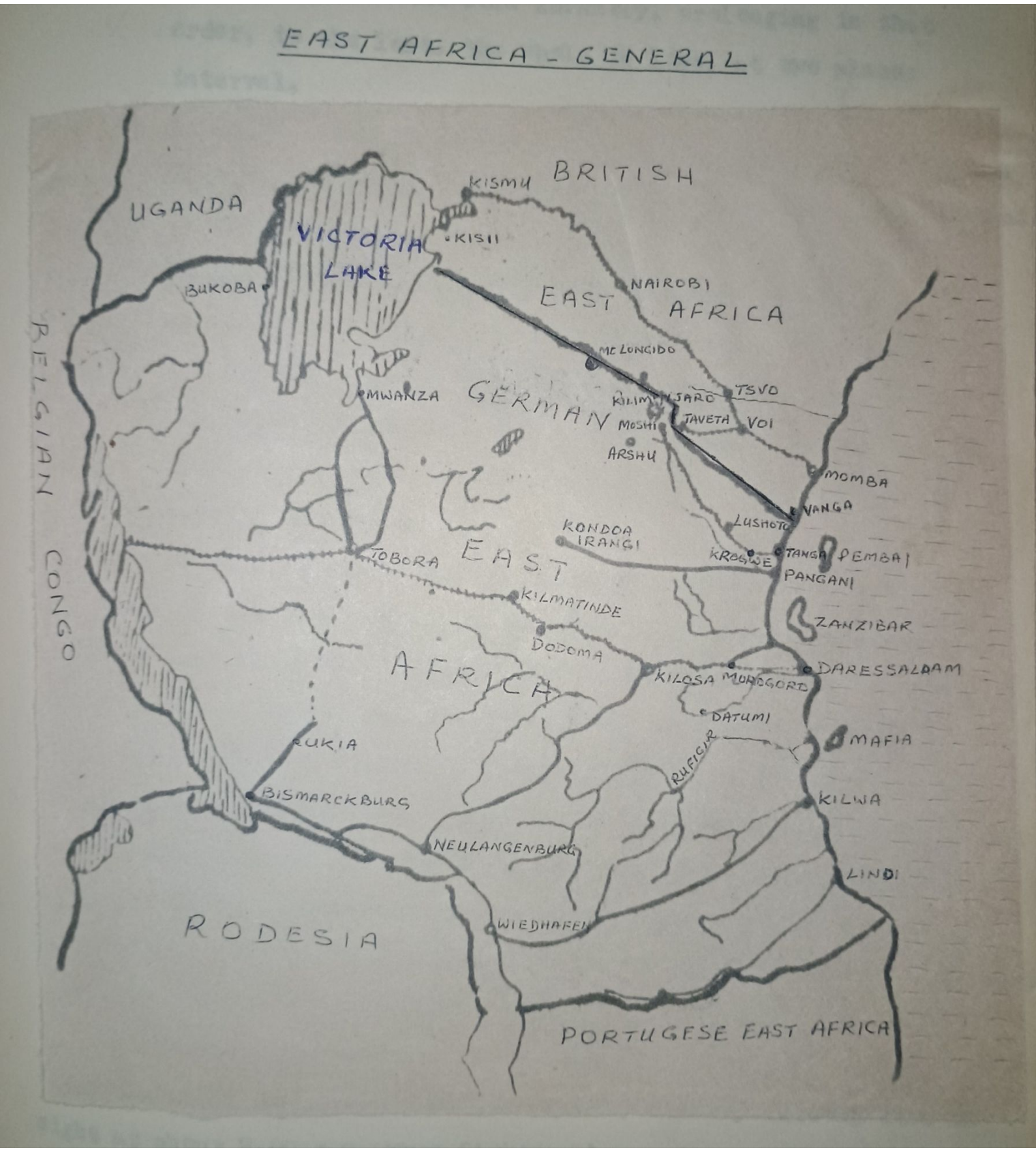
11. Based on the detailed report on the operation by Maj Gen Aitkan, GOC Indian Expeditionary Force 'B'. War Diaries WW/190/H Vol 6 pp 29-38

EAST AFRICA - GENERAL



a) In front, the 2nd and 3rd Kashmir Rifles were on the right with their flanks resting on the harbour, and North Lancashires and the 63rd Infantry, prolonging in that order, to the left. The whole in line, at two places interval.

b) In the rear 10Ist Grenadiers were positioned behind the 63rd Infantry while the 98th Infantry was placed 200 paces behind North Lancashire.

c) As the 61st Battalion and 13th Rajputs were somewhat demoralised due the action of the previous day, the 13th was positioned near Brig Tighe in the rear of and about 300 yards behind the centre of the Kashmir Rifles and the 61st near General Aitken himself about 300 yards in the rear of the Rajputs.

The advance was unopposed till the attacking troops got within 800 yards of the town when they came under heavy fire. So heavy was the fire that the 63rd, 61st and part of 13th battalions at once got demoralised and broke. The failure of the 63rd left a big gap which the Grenadires gallantly attempted to fill. They however got caught in heavy crops fire of rifles and machineguns and heavy losses prevented them from doing anything more than holding on successfully at close quarters. The 98th were then ordered up but they hesitated and although they did not actually halt; yet they were so half hearted that they proved to be of little use.

The Imperial Service Brigade on the right met with little opposition till the enemy position at deep railway cutting came in sight at about 2.30 p.m. when fighting began in good earnest. The 2nd Kashmir Rifles made a steady way and drove the enemy from the cutting. Sahedar Randhir Singh was conspicuous for his gallantry as he personally led the assault of his company on one of the enemy positions and captured it. [12] When their advance got temporarily checked they were

12. Jammu Archives General Orders C in C (Gocc) no 27 of 1915

immediately reinforced by three companies of Rajputs and the advance was resumed. Meanwhile the Gwalior Infantry had broken up under pressure of enemy fire nearly as soon as the fighting really began and had disappeared for good. The 3rd Kashmir Rifles element of the composite battalion had, however, held on and moving over to the right joined hands with the 2nd Battalion.

On the left of the Kashmir Rifles the North Lancashire were also making steady progress and together they entered the town at the northern end where regular street fighting began. The enemy had prepared every house in the town for tiers of machine guns and rifle fire and own troops were hard put to clearing these houses. Even then all went well for sometime. The Kashmir Rifles captured a machine gun and killed the garrisons of several houses in hand to hand fighting and they were able to make their way along the sea front as far as Kaiser hotel. Meanwhile, however, the Lancashiers had been forced to retire and the entire left flank of the Kashmir Rifles had fallen. At about 4.45 p.m., therefore, the Kashmir Rifles, being without efficient support, and their left flank was wide open, were ordered to withdraw to the railway cutting to take up a defensive position along side the Lancashires. When fighting ceased at dusk these these regiments were holding a line about 500 yards east of Tanga but due to lack of water at this position the force was made to retire another 500 yards during the night.

As many as four battalions in the force had proved to be 'unreliable' in action and there being no reasonable hope of success, General Aitken decided against any renewal of the attack and planned to withdraw his force from German territory. The covering party for the re-embarkation consisted of the North Lancashires and the Kashmir Rifles who were made to take a strong defensive position under Brig Tighe. Constant patrols were sent out to the front and flanks; for, it was all important to prevent the enemy discerning that re-embarkation was taking place. In fact every effort was made to give

the enemy an impression that another attack was being planned. After re-embarkation was completed a flag of truce was sent in and enemy's permission for the removal of the wounded was sought. This was done on 6th November and immediately afterwards the force sailed out of Tanga towards Mombasa.

The Indian Expeditionary force had been greatly mauled during the attack, heaving suffered over 1100 casualities. The Kashmir Rifles too had suffered a large number of casualties but they had performed magnificently in their first ever encounter with a class one enemy. In fact after the action they were rated as 'reliable' troops, as against a large number of 'Unreliable' ones, about whom General Aitken's complained most bitterly. The good work done by the two Kashmir Rifles units throughout the operation reflected the greatest credit on the Comanding Officers, Lt Col Raghubir Singh and Lt Col Durga Singh, in every way. Both these officers handled their units with conspicuous gallantry and skill during the action on 4th November and this fact was reported by the GOC Force 'B' in his despatch on Tonga Operations to the War Office London. The operation having ended in af fiasco gallantry awards were restricted to the minimum as a matter of policy. Even then Lt Col Durga Singh who was commanding the 3rd battalion and had personally led his troops into battle was awarded the Indian Order of Merit (IOM) Ist class for his bravery. Unfortunately the Colonel was seriously wounded when a bullet ran pass his cheek and stuck into his neck resulting in his having to be invalided out to India. Sepoys Ganga Ram and Devi Singh of the same battalion were awarded the Indian Distinguished Service Medal (IDSM) for their gallantry in action.[13] From the 2nd battalion Sub Randhir Singh was awarded IOM II class.

The British failure had not been on the Tanga front alone.

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13. Jammu Archives Mil Block C-36 of 1982 file GO 81/84-85

simultaneous to the attack on Tanga Brig Stewarts had launched his offensive against Longido and Taveta in the west. Both these attacks had failed. It was now feared that, elated by their successes, the Germans would start an offensive against British East Africa. Consequently on reaching Mombasa, while the troops that had proved 'unreliable' were retained at the port town for training and reorganisation, the 'reliable' ones were deployed at various places in the colony to meet the likely threat of invasion. As part of the scheme the 2nd Battalion was moved to Gazi while the 3rd was located at Voi. The four companies of the Gwalior infantry were separated from the companies of the 3rd Kashmir Rifles and despatched to Zanzibar on an urgent request from the Resident there.

Battle of Yasin[14]

Notwithstanding the general defensive posture adopted by the British in East Africa while awaiting reinforcements after the Tanga Taveta debacle, some offensive action was launched in the Umba valley in December 1914. After the German occupation of the major portion of the Umba valley at the commencement of hostilities, the inhabitants thereof had fled their homes and taken refuge under the British. The continued occupation of this territory by the Germans, besides creating the problem of the refugees having to be fed, was causing the faith of the locally in the ability of the British to protect them, to be shaken. All this had necessiated the British re-occupation of the Umba valley. Operations in this costal region were started in the beginning of December 1914 by the Vanga Force which the 2nd Kashmir Rifles formed part. By the end of the month Vanga had been re-taken and the entire Umba valley cleared of the enemy. In order to secure the occupation of the valley the operation was then carried into German

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14. Based on IEF 'B' War Diaries Jan 1915 and The Times History of the War vol X pp 121-160

territory and on 2nd January 1915, Yasin, a port two miles south of the frontier was captured. The plane was then garrisoned by three companies of the 2nd Battalion under Lt Col Raghubir Singh and one company of the Indian army. Meanwhile Expeditionary Force 'C' which was functioning in East Africa as a separate entity under Brigadier Stewart was now merged with Force 'B' under the command of Brigadier Wapshare who had replaced General Aitken at the end of November, when Aitken was taken ill and had had to be evacuated.

The occupation of Yasin by the British alerted the Germans who considered this as preparatory to an attack on Tanga. They not only reinforced Tanga but also planned to evict the British from Yasin. Their first attack came on 12th January but this was repulsed by the Kashmir Rifles, with the Germans suffering heavy casualties. Undeterred the Germans attacked again on the 18th in much greater strength. This attack was also repulsed and the enemy unable to take the position by assault laid seige to it. The telephone line was cut and the garrison lost contact with the headquarters. The enemy ring round the post was then made so tight that a column that was sent for the relief of the garrison could not get anywhere near it. In the attempt to relieve the Yasin garrison the fighting lasted nine hours but to no avail. Ultimately on having completely run out of ammunition and having suffered a large number of casualties that included Colonel Col Raghubir Singh killed, the garrison was forced to surrender on 19 January. Before this 40 men of the Kashmir Rifles stationed at Yasin Sisal factory, even though short of ammunition, fought gallantly and breaking through enemy lines rejoined the Umba force; 19 men getting killed in the process. The obstinacy with which the Kashmir Rifles had fought before their ammunition ran out and they were forced to surrender is evident from the fact that of the 135 odd prisoners taken by the Germans some 115 were wounded and unfit to fight. Besides, the unit had suffered 16 killed including their Commanding Officer and of the wounded, 8 had been so severely

wounded that they subsequently died of their wounds.[15] Among these was Assistant Surgeon Lieutenant Sadhu Narain. Never-the-less the unit had the Germans to pay a good price for their victory. The Germans admitted to having suffered 18 killed and 32 wounded. Brigadier Tighe the Commander of the Vanga force in his report on the action at Yasin considered the behaviour of the troops of the garrison as magnificent.

Condolence messages from the King Emperor were received by the next of the kin of Colonel Raghubir Singh and Lieutenant Sadhu Narain. The services of the Lt Col Raghubir Singh were recognised by the State Government by the immediate grant of a Jagir of Rs. 400/- per annum and two "murrabbas"* (squares) of land to his family. Commenting on his death, Brig J L Rose called it a "glorious one falling at the head of his men fighting for his Chief, King and the country".[16]

Services were also recognised of sepoy Bal Bahadur Chettri and sepoy Dal Bahadur Thapa of the Battalion, who volunteered to carry a message to the post when the telephone line had been cut. They were also recognised The post was completely surrounded by the enemy and the errand was one entailing great risk. Even then the two sepoys accompanied by another two of the King's African Rifles set out for the post on 18/19 January night in a dugout through the man-grove swamp adjoining the post. Chetri and Thappa stayed out all night trying to get past the enemy outposts which were in a close ring round our post and during the attempt they drew occassional fire. Though not successful in reaching the post the effort which resulted in their bringing back useful information regarding the enemy was most commendable. Both were awarded ICM 2nd class for this act of gallantry.[17]

At the time that the 2nd Battalion post at Yasin was attacked, the four companies of the 3rd were located at Tsave. These were now rushed to the Umba valley as reinforcements for the Vanga Force.

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15. Compiled from war casualty returns in Jammu Archives.
16. Jammu Archives Mil Block 'A' file no Nil.
17. Jammu Archives GOCC-27 of 1915.

* one "murraba" is of 25 acres of land

Tsavo was however a long way from Yasin entailing six days journey by land and sea and by the time they could reach anywhere near Yassin, the post had already fallen. The companies were, therefore, diverted to Vanga and deployed in a defensive position there. Later they were withdrawn to another defensive position at Massambini and when the Vanga Force was withdrawn from the Umba valley in early February, the companies of the 3rd battalion moved back to Mombasa and thence to Voi. From Voi the two companies were marched off to Majima (Mzima) and the unit remained so disposed for the next month and a half.

The Stalemate

In April 1915 General Wapshare was transferred to Force 'D' and General Tighe took over the command of service 'B'. It is gratifying to note that in his report on the operations of the force from 14 Dec 1914 to 15 April 1915 General Wapshare placed on record his appreciation of the qualities of the troops of the Kashmir Riflewho fought "bravely and well" despite many handicaps". By now it was quite evident that no offensive could be started unless the force in East Africa was reinforced by two additional brigades. It was also clear that the British and the Indian troops were not suited to fighting in this part of the world due to the peculiar climatic conditions. It was, therefore, decided that offensive action would be started against German East Africa only after troops from South Africa could be shifted to British East Africa which this was possible only when after General Botha was able to complete the conquest of South West Africa. Consequently Force 'B' was, till then, oblighed to adopt a low profile. With the Germans also taking up a defensive ~~position~~ posture a sort of stalemate set in, which lasted throughout 1915. The period was utilised by the British for the construction of a railway line upto Maktau and also for laying out water pipe lines to places of K

water scarcity. The Germans on the other hand engaged themselves in strengthening their defences at Taveta. They also fortified Salaita with an outpost at Mbuyuni. The only fighting that took place was between the patrols of the two sides that tried to interfere in each other's preparations for the decisive battle to come. The Uganda railway (named so because of its destination) was the main target of strong German patrols and the British patrols fought hard to keep the Germans at arm's length.[18]

Details of actions fought by Kashmir Rifles patrols during this period are not available. However being among the 'reliable' troops at that time they appear to have played a leading role in activities connected with protective patrolling, escorting convoys and picqueting in the Voi area. In the performance of these duties many skirmishes took place with the enemy in which the Kashmir Rifles seem to have got the better of him. In the process they suffered a number of casualties in killed and wounded but only while inflicting many more on the enemy. Some of the important skirmishes which have been recorded are narrated in the succeeding paragraphs.

It appears from the war accounts of 3rd Kashmir Rifles that two companies of the 2nd Battalion were seriously involved in fighting near a place called Idlal while escorting a convoy of some 300 mules carrying rations and ammunition. The convoy was attacked by the Germans in overwhelming numbers and the escort was surrounded. One company of 3 KR and one of the King's African Rifles (KAR) were rushed to Idlal for reinforcing the 2 KR companies but before the reinforcements could reach Idlal the escort had sucessfully broken out of the enemy ring and returned to Idlal. They had however been forced to abandon some loads of rations and ammunition. Rifleman Kharak Singh was killed and some ten other sepoys were missing, believed to have been taken prisoners.

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18. Historical Section IEF 'B' War Diaries WW/194/H vol 10

The casualty return of the battalion shows that the action took place on 10th March 1915. On arrival at Idlal the KAR company was sent to the scene of action to recover the lost ammunition and ration three signalers from 3 ~~KR~~ Kashmir Rifles viz., Hazara Singh, Jaijodh Singh and Havildar Waziri Singh accompanied the KAR company. The stores were recovered but unfortunately sepoy Hazara Singh was eaten up by a lion in one of the jungles there.[19]

Sometimes in April that year the 3rd Kashmir Rifles was moved to Nairobi on their way to Kisii and Kajadoo on Lake Victoria for cooperating with the Belgians who were planning to open a front against German East Africa. Two companies each were stationed at these places. The companies at Kajadoo performed convoy escort duties to and from Vasal where the headquarters of the Belgian brigade was located. After an uneventful period of two months at Kissi and Kajadoo 3 ~~KR~~ Kashmir Rifles returned to Voi and were put on railway protection duties. The battalion under the command of Major Gandharab Singh fought a major action at Naddi (Ndi) railway station which was attacked by the Germans in very great strength sometime in the first week of July 1915. In the heavy fighting that broke out the Battalion suffered a number of casualties in killed (including the Commanding Officer) and wounded but the Dogras and the Gorkhas of the Kashmir Rifle held on to their position tennaciously till the arrival of the armoured train, which drove the Germans away from the station. For this gallant action of the battalion, Major Gandharab Singh was posthumously awarded the OBI 2nd class.[20]

Ever since the establishment of the rail head at Maktau in early July the enemy's attampts at disrupting the rail communications became more frequent and his patrolling activity increased to such an extent that it was considered necessary to attack Mbuyuni which was being used by the enemy as a base for raids on the railway.

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19. Jammu Archives Mil Block G-36 of 1928 file G0/81/84-85
20. Ibid

Consequently Brig Gen Malleson marched out of Maktau and attacked Mbuyuni on 14 July. The 3rd Kashmir Rifles who had moved to Maktau after the engagement at Ndi, formed part of ~~General~~ Brigadier Mallesons force. The enemy, however, quickly reinforced his position and Malleson was forced to withdrew after some heavy fighting. The 3rd Battalion was thereafter remained at Taita hills doing picqueting and patrolling.[21]

On 30th July occured a skirmish between 2 ~~KR~~ Kashmir Rifles and a German patrol which resulted in the capture of the German insighia, a brass eagle, which is held by the Battalion as a prized war trophy to this day. The story as narrated by Sub/ Subedar Lal Singh who took out a 50 strong patrol from Mazima (Mzima) to Maktau runs as follows:-

"At about 4 P.M. on 30th July 1915 when about 18 miles from Maktan (Maktau) my point which was about 20 yards in front of me suddenly shouted 'look out Subedar Sahib there are some enemy on our right'. I saw some Germans half hidden in the grass about 15 yards to my right front and close to the track. I atonce halted, ordered the men near me to extend and open rapid fire. The men in the rear were ordered to extend on my right and left.

"When two of the enemy had been killed they started to retire. I followed them up firing for some 200 to 300 yards. I noticed that three men were wounded but they got away. I am unable to say whether any more were hit. None of my men were hit.

"All my porters dropped their loads and bolted when I opened fire. I sent four men with one of KAR (who was with the patrol as a guide) to collect the porters and keep them together but they were unable to do so and all my porters had deserted. I waited for sometime to try and collect them but failed. I did not care to wait any longer and so collected my men and marched into Maktau where I arrived at 7.30 A.M. on 31 July".

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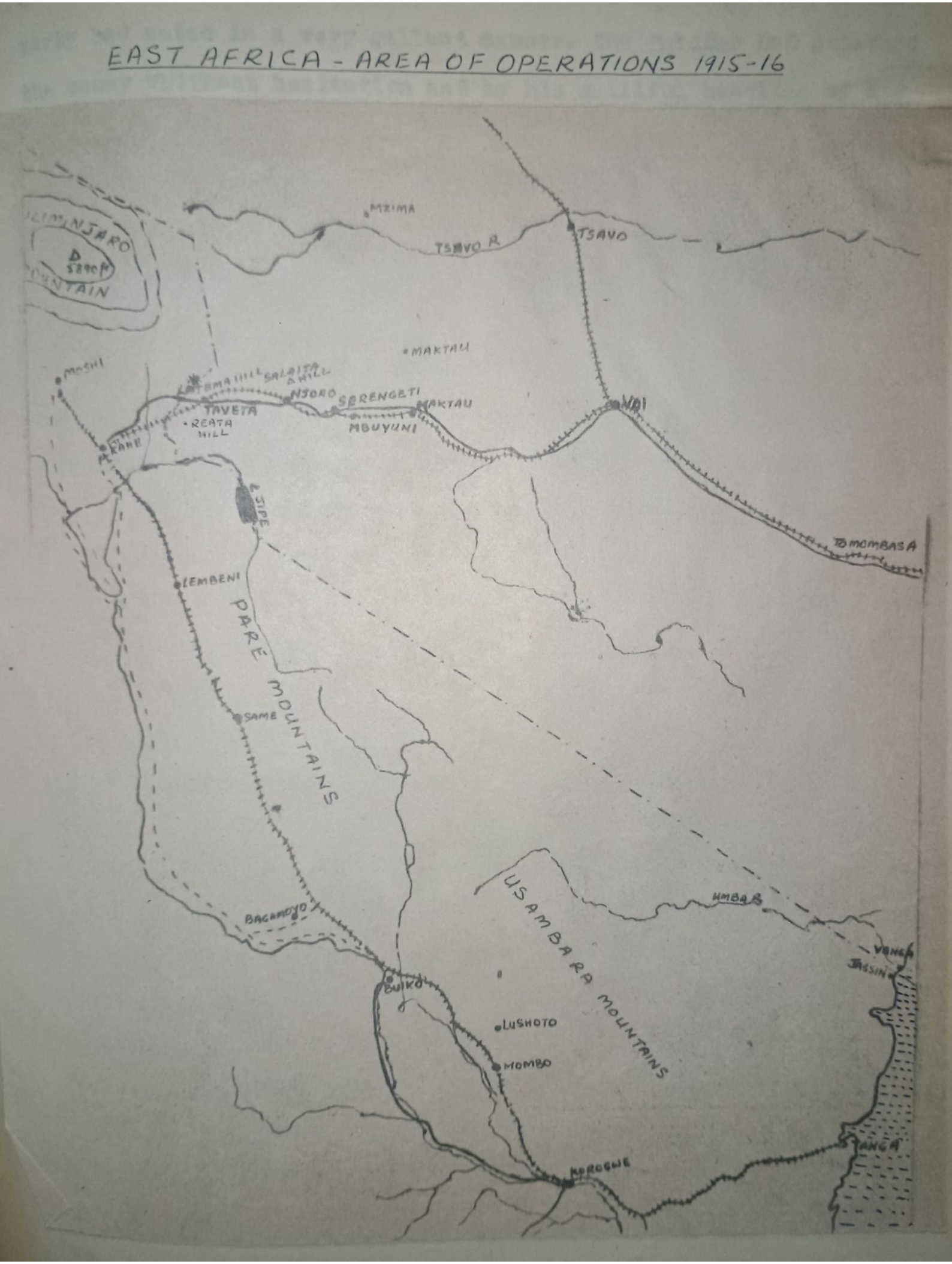
21. Historical Section IEF 'B' War Diaries WWI/197/H vol 13

EAST AFRICA - AREA OF OPERATIONS 1915-16



In forwarding this report of Subedar Lal Singh the Officer Commanding Maktau was of the opinion that the Subedar and all his party had acted in a very gallant manner. The Subedar had attacked the enemy whithout hesitation and by his skillful handling of his men inflicted on the enemy casualties and compelled him to retire without loss to his own men. He considered the Subedar's conduct worthy of commendation. The conduct of the patrol was subsequently appreciated by the General Officer Commanding (GOC) Force 'B', General Tighe, in writing.

Among the dead bodies (later confirmed to have been three) and the kit left behind by the German patrol, that had fled after the action, was found the German Eagle (in brass) which was proudly sent back to the State. The capture of the German insignia was symbolic of the proWess of the Jammu troops and Raja Hari Singh who had taken over as the C-in-C had the Eagle mounted on a teak-wood frame for display at the Battalion Quarter Guard at Satwari.[22]

In November 1915 it was appreciated that to be able to start an offensive the Expeditionary Force 'B' was required to be increased to two division strength. Consequently demand was placed for x additional troops for making up the required strength. MeanWhile German General Botha had completed the conquest of SW Africa in July 1915 and the Union was now in a position to send troops to East Africa. The South African Expeditionary Force consisting of three cavalry regiments, 5x4 gun QF (Quick Firing) Batteries and six infantry battalions, finally arrived in early 1916. The Indian Expeditionary Force which had received three additional battalions (40th Pathan, and 129th and 130th Baluchis) during 1915 was now reorganised to form two divisions- Ist East African Division under Maj Gen JM Stuart and 2nd East African Division under Maj Gen Tighe. The 2nd KR Kashmir and 3 KR Kashmir Rifles were merged into

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22. Jammu Archives Mil Block A-13 of 1915 file No 8-W

one composite Kashmir Battalion and formed part of the 2nd East African Division. Appreciating the important role that the South African Expeditionary Force was to play in the coming operations, General Smuts was approached to take over the over all command of the forces in East Africa but he declined and Lt Gen Sir Horace Smith was appointed the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C General Smith however fell sick and General Smuts being approached again accepted the command appointment and took over w.e.f. 12 February 1916.[23]

The British advance post in the beginning of January was at Maktau and to that point the railway line had been completed. To facilitate the impending operations Mbuyuni was occupied and by the end of February the railway from Voi was brought upto Njoro; only three miles east of the German advanced position at Salaita.

British Offensive 5 March to 20 March[24] 1916

Immediately on taking over the command, General Smuts started preparations for an offensive, the first phase of which he wanted to be completed before the rainy season (Mid March to Mid May) set in. Racing against time preparations were completed by 4 March 1916 and the first phase of offensive entailing capture of Taveta, Moshi and Kahe was launched on the 5th of the month. For this General Smuts had disposed his troops as follows :-

a) Ist East African Divison under Maj Gen Stuarts at Longido.
b) 2nd East African Division under Gen Tighe at Mbuyuini and Serengeti.
c) Ist South African Mounted Brigade and 3rd South African Infantry Brigade under Brig ~~Gen~~ Van Deventer at Mbuyuni and Serengeti
d) 2nd South African Infantry Brigade as reserve at Mbuyuni.

As per plan the 2nd East African Division was to advance against Salaita while Van Deventer was to strike North-~~West~~ West, ~~West~~

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23 The Times History of the War Vol X PP 121-160

24. Ibid vol XII pp 77 to 116, and Draft History J&K Rifles.
In the Draft History which also appears to form the basis for General DK Palit's narrative in Jammu and Kashmir Arms (P106) the year of the offensive has been given out as 1915 (~~Page 104~~) which is ~~obviously~~ not correct and has been ignored.

seize the high ground around Lake Chala, and develop a turning movement against Taveta from the West. The task of the Ist East African Division was to strike from Longido, south between Kilimmjaro and Mount Meru, and thereafter to cut the enemy's line of retreat at Kahe on the Tanga railway. Due to the long distance that the Ist Division was to cover it was given a lead of 2 days over the advance of Deventers formation. Consequently it started its advance on 05 March while the later made the first move on the 7th. It turned out later that the lead was not enough as besides the longer distance that the Ist Division had to cover it was required to pass through country covered with thick bush and infested with lions, elephants and rhinos who disputed man's right of way.

General Deventer advanced on 07 March and on the 9th got astride the Moshi road behind Taveta. The enemy vacated Taveta but fell back along the Kahe road. When the 2nd division attacked Salaita on 09 March they found it abandoned. The enemy withdrew in a very orderly manner fighting his way back and took up covering positions at Latema and Reata before finally withdrawing to Kahe. 2nd Division launched its operations against Latema- Reata positions on 11 March but though the positions were taken the ehemy was able to make a clean break to Kahe, the objective of the Ist Division The Germans passed through New Moshi on their way to Kahe on 12 March two days before the Ist division could reach the place to cut their withdrawal. At Kahe the enemy occupied positions offering great advantage to defence but when his rear was threatened by an outflanking move made by the South African Division under Deventer, he hastened to withdrew from the Kahe defences and blew up the Pangani bridge behind him. Kahe was thus captured by the Ist Division without much fighting on 21st March. MeanWhile Arusha had been captured by mounted scouts on 20 March. The first phase of the General Smuts offensive had thus been successfully completed before the advent of the rainy season.

After this little campaign lasting about 18 days General Smuts utilised the period of the rainy season for reorganising his force for the main offensive. Under the new arrangement the army was organised into three divisions- two (2nd and 3rd) formed by contingents from South Africa and the other (Ist) to include Indian and British forces. The command of the Ist Division was given to Maj Gen A R Hoskins while the 2nd and 3rd were commanded by General Deventer and Coen Brits respectively. The Kashmir Rifles (composite battalion) now formed part of the Ist Brigade of the Ist East African Division; 130th Baluchis, 29 Punjab and 2nd Rhodesian Regiment being the other battalions of the brigade. The work on the extension of the railway was now accelerated to about one mile a day and by 25th April it had reached Kahe and linked up with the German railway.

While the Ist and 3rd Divisions were waiting for the rains to cease the 2nd under Deventer had moved out of Arusha and pushed on towards Kondoa Irangi and occupied it on 19 April with the purpose of dominating the Masai Steppe. The stage had thus been set for the commencement of the final offensive against the German forces in East Africa after the rainy season.

The Main Offensive.[25]

The rain abated by mid May and the main offensive was launched immediately afterwards. By then the enemy had taken up strong defensive positions in the Pare and Usumbra Mountains. General Smuts' plan was to send the main column consisting of the Ist East African Division and most of the artillery and transport, down the left bank of the Pangani river, while a smaller column under Brig General Hannyngton followed the railway, and the third column, smaller still, consisting of the 3rd Kings African Rifles entered the Pare mountains on the North-East through the Ngulu gap.

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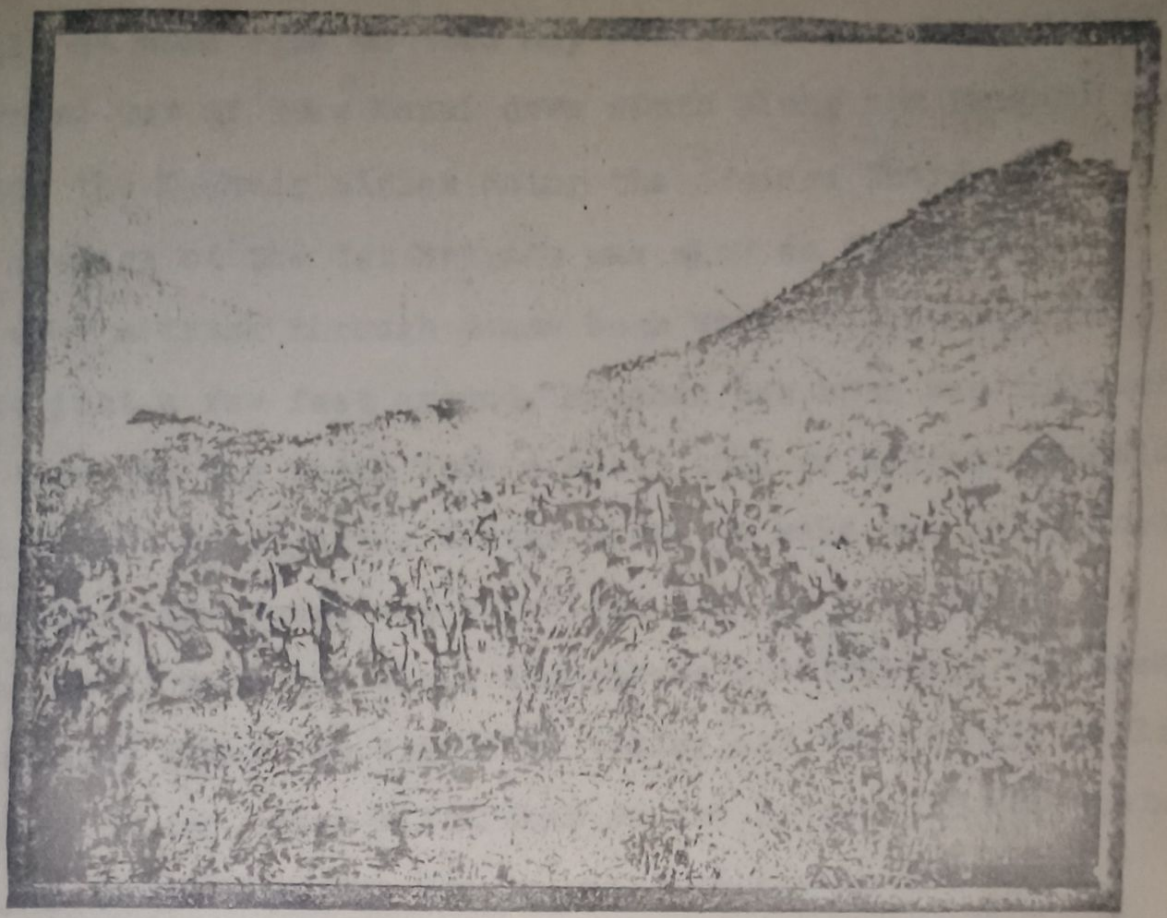
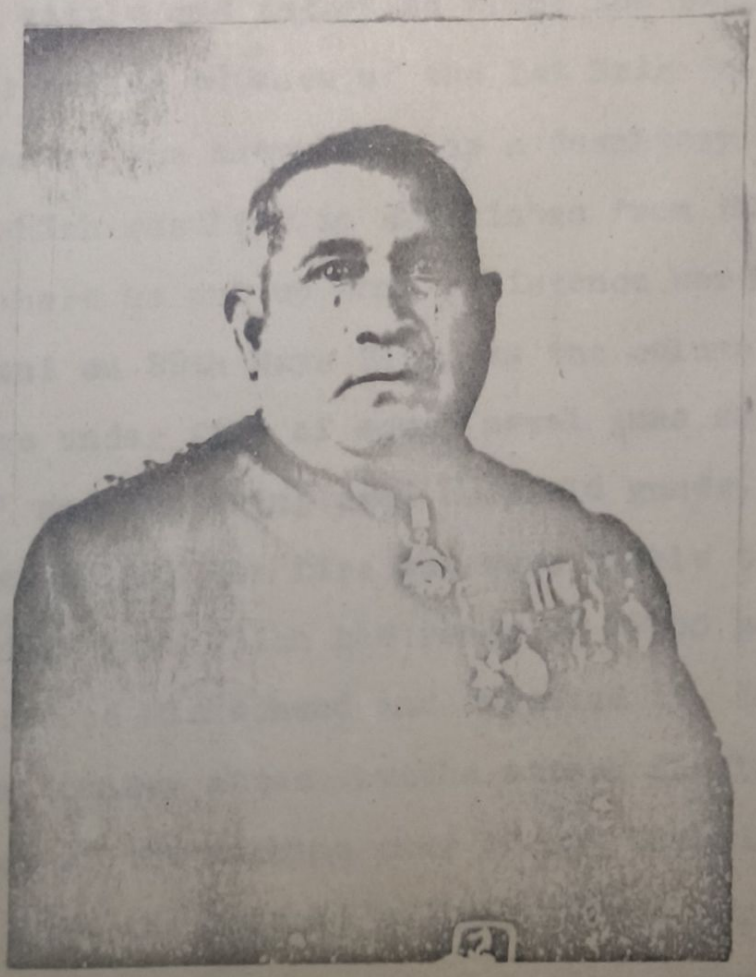
25. Ibid



TYPICAL BUSH COUNTRY AND A GERMAN TRENCH ON THE HILL-SIDE.



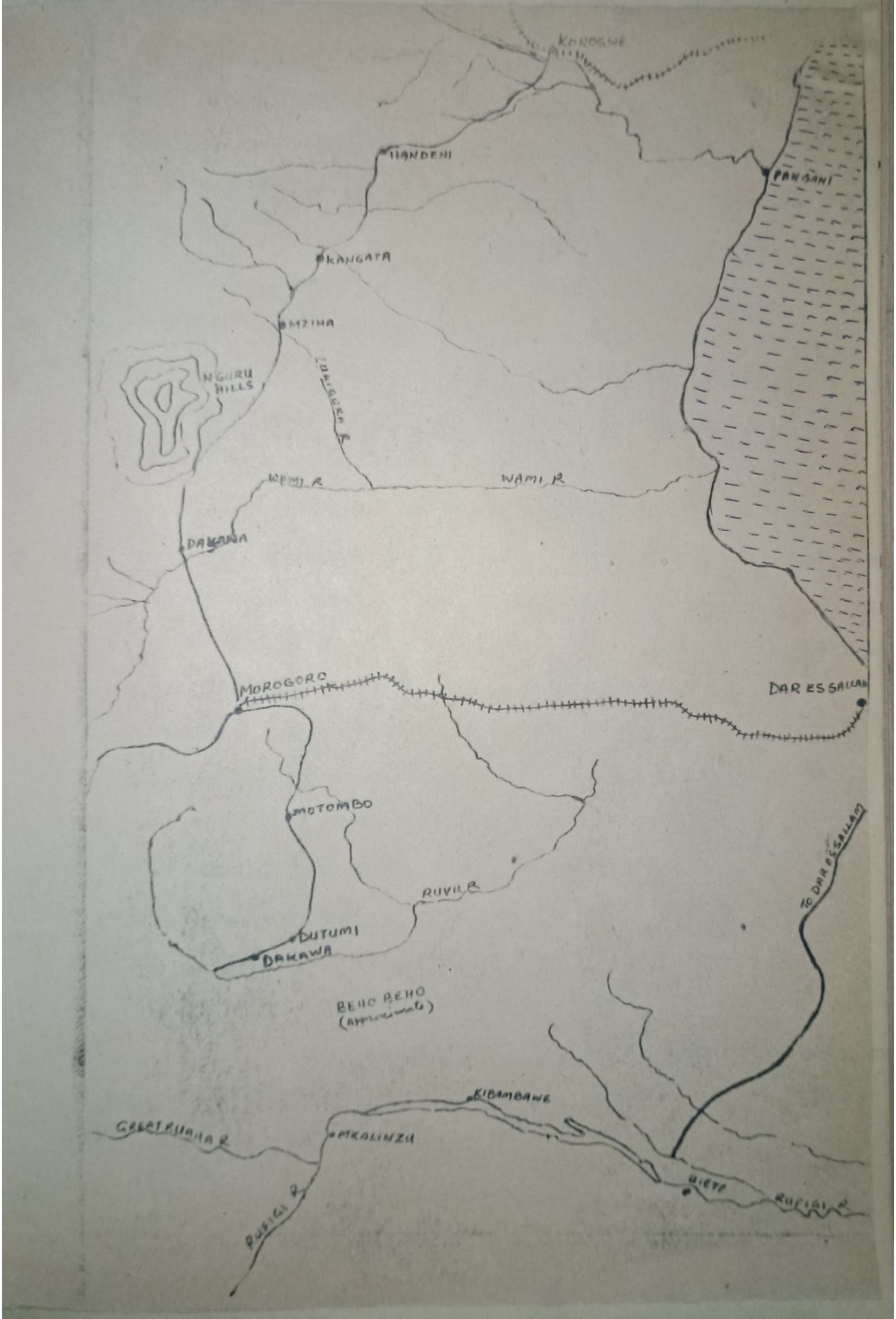
Lt Col Durga Singh OC 3rd Kashmir Rifles 1914

Accordingly at moon rise on 23rd May 1916, the Ist East African Brigade moved out of Soke Masai down south along the Pangani river valley with the Kashmir Rifles doing the advance guard.

The advance of the Ist Brigade was slow as it entailed movement over a track through dense bush where visibility was limited to just a few feet around. Besides, the bush was infested with the Tse Tse fly which took a heavy toll of baggage animals and to an extent of fighting troops also. To make the going worst for the troops, the tract was waterless and the heat so exhausting as to make the whole atmosphere ~~stai sffl ing~~ stifling. The task of the advance guard was even more trying and the Kashmir Rifles took turns with the other battalions of the Brigade in performing this arduous duty. The bush was encountered again and again during the Brigade's seven days march upto Buko which was reached on 31 May 1916. All the while the enemy generally declined to offer a pitched battle and retreated along the railway in the face of the determined advance of the Ist Brigade. Nevertheless even as he retreated the enemy kept up a desultory fire on the advance column which resulted in skirmishes from time to time. The only place where he put up some resistance worth the name was at Mickocheni on 29th May. Here, as the column approached the ~~town~~ town, it came under fire of enemy naval guns, salvaged from the 'Konigsberg' and now being used as field guns. The guns with the columns replied the fire but were unable to counter the fire of these naval guns which had range of 12000 yards. Next day the Baluchis attacked Mickochend and captured it. Immediately the enemy launched a counter attack butthe attack fizzled out before the sweeping fire of the machine guns of the Kashmir Rifles.

The column down the Pangani had, by forced marched to Buiko, outstripped its line of communication. Rations were already diminished by half and the casualities due to War and sickness, (mostly malaria) were mounting every day. The railway line had been

EAST AFRICA - AREA OF OPERATION - 1916-17



cut by the enemy so effectively that the trains could not move beyond Kahe and a distance of some 80 miles from the railhead to Buiko where the troops had reached had to be traversed by a ghastly track on which motor vehicles could not do more than 4 miles an hour. Consequently to allow the administrative set up to catch up with the advancing troops, the column halted at Buiko for a week.

When the advance was resumed on 6th June, 1916, the troops were happy to be on proper road once again after crossing the Pungani river. On the morning of 9th June a flying column composed of the Punjabis and the Baluchis, with 27 Mountain Battery in support, was despatched to intercept the enemy who was being pushed back by the Brigade column moving down the Tanga line. Mombo was captured and so was Welhelmstal (Kushoto) the summer capital of the German colonial government and with this the entire Usambra plateau passed into British hands. There after Hannyngton was asked to abondon the Usambra operations and join the main column. The 1st Brigade continued the persuit and after traversing large tracts of waterless country, where the going proved extremely difficult, reached Handeni on 11th June. At Handeni while the 1st Brigade under Brig Sheppard demonstrated against the enemy in the front, the 3rd under Brig Beve was sent westerly in an outflanking move to cut the enemy's rear. The enemy immediately vacated Handeni and own troops occupied it without much fighting.

On 12th June the Kashmir Rifles, with a mountain battery in support, was ordered to advance on the Morogoro road to secure a track junction near Kangata. On the first day the Battalion marched through the familar grey green thickets of thorn, waterless and haunted by the dreadful tse tse fly. The following day it marched through camparatively open country but had to move cautiously expecting to bump into the enemy any time. No enemy was, however, encountered. By the end of the day the track junction which was required to be secured was reached and the column

immediately went into a defensive position. MeanWhile information had been received that the Germans had an advanced post at Mzinga (Mzaha) on the Morogoro raod. The bulk of the German force was believed to be concentrated on the northern bank of the Lukigura river. Beyond the River in the south was a mass of N'Guru mountains which dominated the road to Morogoro. It was appreciated that once the enemy got established in these hills, it would be difficult to dislodge him. General Smuts, therefore, planned to cut off the forces north of Lukigura by a secret out flanking move.Brig Hannyngton with the greater part of his brigade arrived at Handeni from Korogwe on June 20 in time to take part in the operation, through which General Smuts hoped to compell the enemy to stand and fight.

On 23rd June General Hoskins with two battalions of South African infantry, the composite battalion of the Kashmir Rifles, 25th Royal Fusiliers and a small body of mounted Scouts left camp on 23rd June and next morning crossed the Lukigura up stream of the place where the Germans were entrenched and got astride the road behind the enemy position. The same morning the remainder of the Ist Division under Brig General Sheppard advanced direct to the Lukigura. At midday the enemy was engaged by both the columns; being attacked simultaneously on three sides. The Germans put up a stout fight and then managed to get away to the safety of N'Guru hills. They were helped in this by the denseness of the bush which hid their movement. "Special distinction was earned in this day's fighting by the Kashmiri and it was a source of gratification that the Indian Imperial Service troops had proved their worth, though not all the contingents did as as well as the Kashmiri Rifles. The 25th Fusiliers were coupled with the Kashmiri for conspicuous bravery on this occasion".[26] It appears that during the fight the Gorkhas and the Digras of the

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26. The Times History of the War vol XII p 104. The troops have been referred here to as Kashmiris meaning troops from Kashmir State.

Kashmir Rifles had made a daring bayonet charge (a very rare occurrance in bush warfare) and cut up the best part of a German company. One gun and a couple of machine guns were captured while a large number of Germans surrendered to the Kashmir Rifles alongwith their banner. The banner and the machine guns were retained by the Battalion as war trophies.

In the N'Guru hills the enemy was reinforced from the south making the position so strong that it could not now be attacked immediately. General Smuts, therefore, decided to camp on the M'isha river some 8 miles beyond Lukigura to be able to co-ordinate the advance of the Ist Division with the advance of the South African column in the west. The halt was also necessary for resting, refitting and reorganising the troops that had marched some 200 miles over difficult country practically without a break since 23 May. The month and a half's stay at M'ishi was, however, not to be complete rest for the troops. The camp was indolently bombarded by the enemy from his safe positions in the N'Guru mountains, which proved to be of much ninssance value. Besides, the troops were required to carry out intensive patrolling both for keeping the enemy patrols away from own positions, as well as for gaining information about his dispositions.

While the Ist East African +Division was halted, operations were launched along the coast. Tanga was captured on 7th July 1916 and with this the occupation of Usambara was completed. The port of Pangani fell to the British on 23rd July and Sadani on 01 August. When Bagamoyo was captured on 15th Aug the whole of the area from the sea to the main column in the west could be considered to have been cleared of the enemy. Also during the period General Beventer had advanced from Kandoa Irangi to Dodoma. Kikombo was captured on 30 July and by 09 August his Division had concentrated at Nijangalo east of Dadoma.

As soon as the news regarding the move of the South African column was received at the M'sihi Camp the Ist East African Division was ordered to advance and attack the formidable enemy position in the Ma Guru mountains. The Ist Brigade was directed to carry these positions while advancing along the valley. A fierce battle was fought at Matomondo on the 10th and 11th August at the end of which the enemy was driven back with heavy losses. Thereafter the enemy was persued by the Brigade with the Kashmir Rifles doing the advance guard. At Dakawa another major action was fought and the enemy routed once again. He was, however, able to break contact as he withdrew towards Morogoro. In this action the Ist Brigade had suffered over 120 casualties but the enemy was estimated to have suffered many more. Morogoro was captured on 26th August 1916 with the Germans being able to effect yet another clean break.

The Ist Brigade continued to advance along the eastern slopes keeping in constant touch with the strong enemy rearguards. Actions were fought and prisoners taken daily while by the end of the second week of September the enemy was pushed back to the M'geta river. Active operations were suspended at this stage as the Ist Division was forced to rest and refit due to the large number of casualties it had suffered in sick and wounded. As in the case of other units in the Division, sickness had effected the fighting strength of the Kashmir Rifles very severely and reinforcements from the State had not been able to keep pace with the rate of invalidation due to disease. Besides, some unfit who continued to remain with the Battalion the Kashmir Rifles had about 235 admissions in hospital due to sickness (mostly malaria, dysentry, blackwater fever and Tse Tse) as on 5th September 1916 and the number was daily on the rise. Those who returned from the hospital remained unfit for arduous duties for quite sometime more.

On 25th September 1916 L/Nav Manbir of Kashmir Rifles (3rd

battalion) scrificed his life in the performance of his duty. He had been given the task of observing the enemy position on the north bank of the M'geta river. He knew fully well that his life would be in danger and yet he performed his duty at great personal risk. For this act of bravery Manbir was awarded IOM 2nd class, posthumously.[27]

While the Battalion was so halted, to every one's pleasant surprise seven other ranks of the 2nd Battalion who had been taken prisoners on 28 April 1915 rejoined the battalion on 27th September 1916 after escaping from the German prisoners-of-war camp. Thereafter men of the Kashmir Rifles taken prisoners in the beginning of the War trickled back to the Battalion in twos and threes between October 1916 to February 1917; till as many as 90 had escaped and rejoined.[28] There had been a total of 155 such prisoners and 25 of them had died of wounds and sickness. Unfortunately there is no record of the story of their stay as prisoners and subsequent escape. It is only known that they were kept at Tobora and during the course of their confinement they were committed to thecare of one Mirza Umar Beg, an Indian settled in German East Africa, who was appointed by the Germans as interpreter cum overseer. Beg was accused of the most brutal maltreatment of the Indian prisoners under his care. The cruelty of this man was so notorious that the Germans themselves were constrained to take notice and Umar Beg was tried and sentenced to 5 years imprisonment. The convict, however, managed to escape from jail and got himself enlised in the Belgian army. When the Balgians captured Tabora in September 1916, a report of Umar Beg's in-human behaviour towards the prisoners was made to them and they handed him over to the British in East Africa. He was then convicted by a military court of gross cruelty to prisoners of war and sentenced to be shot. The sentence was probably carried out on 22 May 1917 after

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27. Jammu Archives GOCC 126/1916
28. Historical Section IEF 'B' War Diaries 1916-17

confirmation by GOC East African Forces. As regards the prisoners' escapes from German custody it appears that some escapes took place when Tabora was threatened by the Belgians in September 1916 and the prisoners were in the process of being transferred to some safer places. After their escape most of them marched for several days through the jungles and unknown country, remaining hungry for most of the days and living on jungle fruit for the rest.[29]

Meanwhile the Ist J&K Mountain Battery had also arrived in German East Africa. Embarking at Karachi on 26th November 1916 it arrived at Dar-es-Salam (captured by the British on 04 September) at the end of December. From here it was immediately moved to join the Ist East African Brigade just in time to take part in the operations beyond M'geta. The battery was commanded by Major Dharam Singh with Major A F Cole of the Royal Artillary as the SSO. The strength of the battery was five officers and 198 rank and file. It is interesting to note that General Smuts had requested for the services of the both the J&K batteries in East Africa by name and C-in-C India while showing his reluctance to part with either had finally yeilding to sending one - the Ist Battery. At that time one section of the battery was located at Quetta for rearmament and reorganisation preparatory to the reorganisation of the entire battery as a 4 x 10 pdr gun battery. On being earmarked for services overseas the second section joined the first on 22 October and the process of re-organisation and rearmament was hastened.[30] The request of General Smuts for organising the battery into three sections (two guns each) was turned down by the C-in-C India on political and administrative grounds; whatever they may have been.[31]

Timed to begin on 26th December 1916, the opening movements on the M'geta front had to be postponed the 31st due to rains. For

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29. Jammu Archives Mil Block 'B'- 25 of 1916
30. Jammu Archives Mil Block G-36 of 1928 file no GO 81-84-85
31. Historical Section IEF 'B' War diaries WA/208/11 (Sep to Nov 1916

General Smuts two main considerations governed the dispositions of his troops. One was the securing of a crossing over the Rufigi and the other was the capture, if possible, of the Germans immediately to his front. His problem, therefore, was to seize the crossing without allowing Von Lettow to become aware of his intention so as to prevent him from evading the heavy blow, by an early retirement from his front. To secure the crossing General Smuts detatched Brigadier Brig Beves 2nd South African Brigade to make a wide detour and capture and hold a bridge-head on the Rufigi at Kwa M'Kalinzo, 20 miles south west of Kibambawe. This was achieved on 3rd January 1917. To keep the Germans in their positions while Beve was making the detour, Smuts delivered a holding attack from his forward lines on the Dutumi sector and at the same time had two columns working their way round the enemy flanks. The left or the east flanking column consisted of the Kashmir Rifles and a Nigerian battalion under Lt Col R A Lyall (SSO with the Kashmir Rifles) while the right or the west column was Sheppard's Ist Brigade. The Kashmir Riflesmade contact with and attacked the Germans on the afternoon of Ist January. The Germans realising that their route of withdrawal was being blocked, began to withdraw and in an attempt to force their wayx out they heavily attacked the Nigerian part of the column. The Nigerians, however, stood firm forcing the Germans to seek escape through the route to the west. Here they were opposed by the Baluchis from Sheppard's column but inspite of the Baluchis holding their gound against desperate German attacks, they could not prevent the enemy from escaping, as the line they had to cover was too extended, and by 2nd January he had occupied a strong position on the Chogowali river near Beho-Beho.

Crossing of the Rufigi

Disappointed, as General Smuts was, at the escape of the Germans from a well laid trap, he decided to try another similar movement

before the enemy crossed over to the other side of the Rufigi. He, therefore, redeployed his troops to surround the enemy positions at Beho-Beho. While the front was held, the Ist Brigade moved right behind and on 4th January fought a severe action with the Germans withdrawing from Beho-Beho. The Germans, however, managed to escape once again. Pursued by the Ist Brigade, which had been by now joined by the Kashmir Rifles, the Germans retreated to ~~Kimbabwe~~ Kibambawe. When the Ist Brigade reached ~~Kimbabwe~~ Kibambawe on 5 January they found that the Germans had crossed over the bridge and removed the road/way after crossing over themselves. The Ist Brigade then effected an opposed river crossing on 7th January. Many men were swept away by the turbulent River but nothing deterred the units of the Brigade (including the Kashmir Rifles) from crossing over. The Brigade suffered some 200 casualities but the enemy had suffered much more. The next day in conjunction with the 2nd South African Brigade, the Ist Brigade cleared the enemy of the southern side of the river at ~~Kimbabwe~~ Kibambawe.[32]

Heavy and unprecedented rains broke out in the middle of January 1917 and advance beyond Rufigi was forced to a halt, as large tracts of land in the area of operations got inundated and the roads and tracks became so boggey as to make all movement well near impossible. MeanWhile General Smuts had been recalled by his Government for an impirtant assignment elsewhere and Lt Gen (Lieut General) A R Hoskins had taken over the command of the forces in East Africa. The rains continued till the end of April and throughout this period, apart from minor local actions now and then, military operations remained stalled. The period was therefore utilised by General Hoskins for reorganising his forces. Continuous fighting and disease had taken a heavy toll of the fighting men and some units had been

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32. A Popular History of the Great War edited by Sir J.A. Hammerton Vol IV London, pp 317-321.

reduced to mere skeletons. The sick in the 2nd Kashmir Rifles, as on 20 January 1917, had reached a staggering figure of 505 while 235 of those present in the unit had been declared unfit for duty. The 3rd Battalion had some 96 sick in hospital on that day and about 10 in the unit who were unfit for duty. A case for the relief and return of these units to India was, therefore, taken up by General Hoskins with the C-in-C India through the Secretary War Office London. But as he considered that the Kashmiris were "specially suited for East Africa", and that they had "consistently done well" he pleaded that they be replaced only by another J&K battalion.[33] This was, however, not accepted by the C-in-C India as the only other battalion of the J&K Imperial Service Corps left in the State was the Ist Kashmir Infantry which was posted at Gilgit and owing to the strategic importance of the area the Battalion could not be pulled out from there without relief. General Hoskins appears to have pressed his case for sometime and then relented. In his final communication with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff on the subject he wrote that "Kashmir battalions have done well because they are good material and have learnt the game" and that "I shall be sorry to loose them".[34]

The Kashmir battalions were consequently pulled out of the operational area after their last action at Nigoscki on 2 March 1917 and moved to Dar-es-Salam via Morogoro. The units embarked at Dar-es-Salam on 25 May 1917 and arrived at Bombay on 10 June. General Deventer who had assumed the command of the East African Force on 24 May 1917 sent the following telegram to C-in-C India in appreciation of the work done by the Kashmir Rifles during the war:- "On departure of the 2nd and 3rd Kashmir Rifles for India I desire to place on record, for your information and that of the Maharaja,

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33. Historical Section IEFB War Diaries WW1/209/H vol 25
34. Ibid WW1/210/H vol 6 (Ist March to 31st ~~March~~ May 1917

appreciation of the meritorious services of these two regiments for 2 years and six months they have been in East Africa. Spirit of these two battalions excellent, they are thoroughly reliabile."[35]

During their 2½ years service in the war in East Africa the two battalions had earned laurels which few regiments in the Indian army can, perhaps, boast of. This is borne out by the impressive tally of gallantry awards conferred on the men and officers of the units. Together the two battalions had earned CIE one, OBI 1st cl one, IOM Seven, IDSM twelve, IMSM Seventeen, Croix-de-Guerre two, Order of St George IV Cl two, and Order of St Stanislas one.

The Maharaja and the people of the State had, therefore, reasons to feel jubiliant and proud of the work done by the Kashmir Rifles during the war in East Africa. Arrangements on a very large scale were made by the Durbar to accord a warm reception to the troops at the Jammu Tawi railway station. The Dogra Sabha participated in the reception as representatives of the people of Jammu. Later the battalions marched past through the Jammu City, proudly displaying their war trophies (details at Appx-C) which included the Brass Eagle and the German flag captured by the 2nd Battalion. The war veterans received big ovation from thousands of citizens who lined their route of march.

OTHER ACTIVITY CONNECTED WITH THE WAR EFFORT

The period that the two battalions were on active service overseas also proved to be a period of great activity within the State. The main activity was that connected with the recruitment, training and the arranging of the reinforcements for the units on the front. During the first five months of action itself the two units had suffered as many as 319 casualties due to fighting and disease. In subsequent years also the rate of the casualties continued to remain high due to disease if not so much due to enemy action, and the state military authorities found it difficult to

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35. Ibid WWI/213/H vol 29 (Dec 1917 to Feb 1918)

arrange reinforcements at pace with the rate of casualties. To meet the situation the strength of 2 K~~-R~~ (Kashmir Rifles) Depot was immediately raised by an extra company (118 men) and the rate of recruitment was accelerated. By the end of March 1915, 119 Gorkhas were recruited at Gorakhpur and 515 Dogras at Jammu. Of these 118 recruits were sent to each of the two Depots of the 2nd and 3rd Battalions while the rest were sent to the Central Infantry Depot (raised in 1905). While the recruits were being trained, 300 selected men from the Regular troops were attached with the Imperial Service Infantry as stand by, for immediate reinforcements. The Regular troops were relieved of all the guard duties with the civil (from) war 2nd January 1915 (onwards) and their place was taken by the police and military pensioners enrolled for the purpose. Pardon was granted to deserters to induce them to return to their units.[36]

The first batch of reinforcements, 185 strong, was despatched overseas on 5th December 1914 to make up the casualties suffered during the abortive Tanga action. A small batch of some 57 men left on 6 January 1915 probably for the same purpose. Despatch of yet another batch of 152 men was necessitated on 6 March same year to make (up), partly, the losses suffered by the 2nd Battalion during the action at Yasin. Thereafter as a lull in the fighting set in only 192 men were despatched to the front during the year from April 1915 to March 1916[37]. However, during the subsequent year when General Smuts launched his offensive the requirements for reinforcements increased once again as battle casualties added up to the ever increasing casualties due to sickness. Consequently 323 officers and men were despatched to the front during

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36. J&K Administrative Reports 1914-1917
37. Jammu Archives Mil Block A-4 of 1915 file no 3- W of 1914.

1916-17. Recruitment had to be stepped up during the year and 79 Gorkhas and 727 Dogras were recruited. For this the upper age limit which had already been raised from 26 years to 28 years at the beginning of the War had to be raised further to 30 years and in addition to the bonus of Rs. 40/- that was being given to the recruit on enlistment, the sponsorer was given Rs. 3/- per recruit as an incentive.[38]

Initially all the casualties evacuated from the field hospitals in the front were admitted in the Mayo Hospital at Lahore. Immediately on their arrival they were visited by the State Prime Minister and the Military Secretary. They were also visited by the Viceroy and His Highness the Maharaja. Subsequently the casualties were transferred to the Military Hospital at Satwari. Each batch of the sick, wounded, and invalids, returning to the State were accorded a warm reception at the Jammu Tawi railway station where all officers were required to be present on that day and the State Band remained in attendence. The Jammu citizens were represented by the Dogra Sabha who arranged refreshments for every incoming batch of War casualties. As a special honour State coaches (horse driven buggies) were used for the conveyance of the War veterans to their units or the hospital. The President of the Kashmir War Comforts Fund released Rs. 1500/- for giving extra diet to the sick and the war wounded while in hospital.

Some of the measures adopted by the Durbar in connection with the War were as under[39] :-

a) Extra allowance was granted to families of soliders serving abroad as their family allotments were not found sufficient for the maintenance and keep up of their children left at Satwa

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38. J&K Administrative Report 1916-17
39. Ibid 1914-18

b) Grant of free supply of limbs to the disabled.

c) The enforcement of rules entitled 'The Soliders (Litigation) Regulation' to protect soliders serving abroad or the Gilgit Agency from Litigation.

d) Increase of pay of NCOs and men by Rs. 1/- p.m.

e) Replacment of the soliders kit free of cost on return from field.

f) Grant of 4 months leave to all ranks on return from field.

g) Grant of wound and injury pensions.

h) Remission of court fee on account of transfer of right of succession, to the heirs of men killed in action.

i) Grant of exemption from 'Kar Begar' (forced labour) to soliders of Kashmir Imperial Service Troops and their relatives.

j) Concession of free travel with Travelling Allowance on return to their homes.

k) Grant of free rations to all Kashmir Imperial Services troops from Subedar downwards.

l) Grant of Indian Army rates of pay to NCOs and sepoys and 50 % increase in pay to officers serving outside the State.

m) Adoption of all rules regarding family allotments and wound injury pensions as introduced in the Indian Army.

n) Grant of one year's pay as gratuity to those killed in action.

o) Grant of field 'Bhatta' at the rate of Rs. 30/- p.m. to senior officers (above Subedars).

The Government of India also announced certain concessions to the Imperial Service Troops in connection with the war. Some of these are noted belqw :-

a) Payment of field 'Bhatta' at revised rates.

b) Renewal of clothing in field at Government expense.

c) Free passage by rail to i) troops granted sick or convalecent

leave or while returning from active service; ii) Gorkhas to and from Dehra Dun while proceeding to receive 'Pani Patya'; iii) soldiers of the IST to and from home once a year while serving in India beyond the limits of their states.

d) Free issue of post cards with special distinctive marks to relatives of the men of the IST for correspondence with the men in the field.

e) The payment of money order commission on remittance of family allotments by the government.

f) Grant of field service working pay on the same conditions and same rates as in the Indian Army.

It is interesting to note that there was much opposition to the grant of such 'lavish' war concessions to troops by government from the civil side, on grounds of financial burden on the State exchequer. The recommendations were, however, forcefully pursued by the youthful commander-in-Chief Raja Hari Singh till they were finally sanctioned.

The Kashmir Imperial Service Troops having proved their worth in the very early stages of the war more demands were placed on them by the Government of India. Formal offer of troops had of course to be made by the Maharaja himself. In the beginning of 1915 the Maharaja's one such offer of two troops of Kashmir Lancers was accepted by the British and 70 men organised into two troops, one each commanded by Risaldar Feroz Khan and Jamadar Nasib Singh, proceeded to the Middle East from Bombay on 15 February 1915. After 19 days journey they reached Ismalia. Here a brigade of three regiments of the Imperial Services Lancers, one each from Hyderabad, Mysore and Patiala, was formed. The Kashmir Lancers troops under Feroz Khan was attached to the Mysore Lancers while the one under Nasib Singh joined the Patalia Lancers. As a reserve for replacing

war casualties among the Kashmir Lancers, 20 sowars, (dismounted), were enlisted, trained and kept in readiness at Satwari.

On return of the 2nd Body Guard and half Raghunath from East Africa, the Maharaja made the offer of Ist Raghu Partap and the revamped 3rd Battalion for service in East Africa. The offer was accepted but as the war in East Africa was nearing its end, the two battalions were earmarked for service in Egypt. Consequently action in connection with the mobilisation of the Ist and the 3rd Battalions for war was taken in hand.

While the 3rd and the 2nd Battalionsx were in East Africa the entire responsibility for the defence of the Gilgit Frontier had devolved on the Raghu Partap and the 2nd Kashmir Mountain Battery. Hard pressed for troops, the State found it impossible to arrange for the relief of troops serving in Gilgit. Some amount of relief was arranged by using the three companies of the 'Regular' army that were attached with the Imperial Service troops. With their help, the six companies that were required to be located in Gilgit all the time could be relieved three companies at a time. The relieved three companies at Jammu were also utilised for sending reinforcements to the units in East Africa. Now, although the 2nd and the 3rd Battalions had returned, they were not immediately available for relieving the Ist Battalion so that its mobilisation may be started. To meet the requirement of an additional infantry battalion for pulling out the Raghupratap from Gilgit a new battalions, numbered as the 2/2 Kashmir Rifles, was raised (in June/July 1917) with Lt Col Gandharb Singh as its first Commanding Officer. The Infantry Depot which Lt Col Gandharb Singh was commanding was merged with the newly raised depot of the Ist Battalion. The strength of the new Battalion was 917 and this figure was reached by transferring men from the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, the Infantry Depot and the Regular army. After 2/2 KR had relieved the Ist Battalion at Gilgit Lt Col Lieut Colonel

Janak Singh assumed command of the Battalion in October 1917; Colonel Gandharb Singh having changed places with Col Janak Singh and taken over as the Secretary to the C-in-C (J&K).[40]

The mobilisation of the Ist Kashmir Infantry was completed by 17th December 1917 and after inspection by His Highness the Maharaja on 19th December, at the end of which he made an award of Rs. 1100/- to the Battalion, it left for Ferozpur for training. The mobilised strength of the Battalion was 1070 i.e., field strength of 930 plus 140 representing the 15% reinforcements. The Battalion was commanded by Lt Col Ishari Singh and accompanied by two doctors- Asstt Surgeon Nand Lal and Sub Asst Surgeon Diwan Chand and the usual number of British SSOs. The Battalion ultimately embarked from Karachi on about 5th February 1918 for active service with the Egyptian Expeditionery Force.

Orders for the mobilisation of the 3rd Raghunath were received in November 1917. As per these orders the Battalion was to form part of the 46th Mobile Brigade at Ambala and be ready to move with the Brigade at 8 hours notice. However, on the State representing against the orders on the gwound that the Gorkhas of the Battalion were yet to return from leave granted to them after their return from ~~the~~ East Africa, the expected date of movex was shifted beyond December 1917. In the meantime the mobilisation equipment of the Battalion was completed. Mobilisation of ~~both equipment and~~ men was completed in early 1918 and the Battalion with a strength of 1049, under the command of Lt Col Hakim Khan and accompanied by the SSOs left Satwari for Ferozepur on 7 March 1918. On its departure the Battalion was awarded Rs. 1000/- by the C-in-C Raja Hari Singh. Initially the unit had been selected by C-in-C India for replacing some Indian battalion

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40. Ibid 1917-18

in Egypt but when the Battalion ultimately embarked at Bombay on 2nd July 1918 it was for a different purpose, as we shall presently see.[41]

MeanWhile the Ist Kashmir MountainBattery was ordered back to India on 15 January 1918. It disembarked at Karachi by the end of February and after a few days stay at Karachi it returned to Jammu where it was accorded a warm reception. Besides the advance to the Rufigi and the opposed river crossing on 7 January 1917 the Battery took part in the operations in the Kilwa and Lindi areas and in the advance up to the Portugese territory frontier.[42] Some of the actions in which the Battery took part were :-

a) Capture of Mkindu	18 January 1917
b) Affair at Tanda Muti	03 August 1917
c) Affair at Narunyu	18 August 1917
d) Action at Nayangao	16-19 October 1917
e) Affair around Chiwata	06-18 November 1917
f) Surrender of Tafel's Force	28 November 1917

During the operations in East Africa the Battery suported a number of Infantry columns; sometimes operating section wise and at other times as a complete battery. All along, the Battery gave a good account of itself each time it went into action. The Battery's action was particularly appreciated when it formed part of General O'Grady's column between August and October 1917. Jamadars Sarup Singh and Khushal Khan displayed conspicuous gallantry on 25 September to earn the award of IOM 2nd class each. For individual bravery in other actions fought by the Battery Naik Kamal Singh was awarded the IDSM while seven others won the Indian Meritorious Service Medal and twelve were mentioned in despatches. For the over all good performance of the Battery during the war the Officer Commanding, Major Dharam Singh was awarded the Order of the British India(OBI) first class with title of Sirdar Bahadur while his second in command

41. Ibid
42. Jammu Archives Mil Block A-5 of 1923 file No 3 M. A/80

Sub Alaf Khan was decorated with OBI second class with the title of Bahadur.[43]

During the time the Battery was in Africa it was lucky in not having any battle casualties inspite of being subjected to heavy counter bombardment by the German 4.1 inch guns a number of times. It, however, suffered a large number of casualties due to sickness which included 21 deaths. There had also been an unfortunate gun accident in which the Battery had suffered three casualties. The casualties were replaced by drafts despatched by the 2nd Mountain Battery. The animals of the B Battery had suffered the maximum. Of the mules that went with the B Battery from the State only one had survived; the rest having scummbed to the tse tse fly and and horse sickness prevalent in Africa.[44]

The Battery was however not to stay long at Satwari and in June 1918 it again moved out on garrison duty to Bannu, under the Command of Major Atta Mohammad Khan. Here it was expanded into a three section battery of 2 x 10 pdr BL guns each. In October it was moved to Quetta again on garrison duty and it was only in February 1919 that it returned to the State. As part of the Quetta Division the Battery made a good name for itself. After an inspection of the Battery the GOC Queta Division remarked that he was "struck by the excellence of the turn out, the condition of the animals and the general efficiency of the Battery".[45]

THE PALESTINE CAMPAIGN[46]

Turkey's entry into the war on 5th November 1914 had created new problems for the British. The safety of the Suez Canal was of

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43. Record of Service of No 1 Kashmir Pack Battery Compiled in April 1920
44. Ibid
45. J&K Administrative Report 1918-19
46. Based on narrative in A Popular History of the Great War Vol V pp 367-384 and Draft History of J&K Rifles.

such importance to the British Empire that military and political control of the Egypt was required to be retained at all costs. Although Britain had held defacto control over the government of Egypt, the country had all along acknowledged the suzerainty of the sultan of the Turkey; even if nominally by payment of annual tributes. In order to forestall Turkey laying claim over Egypt and occupying it, the British thought it prudent to declare a protectorate over Egypt on 18th December 1914 and pledge their responsibility for its defence. The task of defence entailed not only the barring of the Turkish routes of entry into Egypt but also the security of the the Canal so that no portion of it was damaged or blocked by the enemy. For undertaking this task the British had concentrated about 70000 troops in Egypt by January 1915; just in time to meet the Turkish invasion of Egypt on 3 February 1915. The defensive line which the British had occupied to meet the Turkish threat had been very carefully selected and constructed and it withstood all enemy attacks right till the end of 1916 when the British launched their offensive. The Mysore and Patiala Lancers which had a troops of Kashmir Lancers each proformed duties counnected with holding of posts and patroling along the Suez Canal.

At the end of June 1917 General Sir Edmund Allenby took over command of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force. The Turkish army, after being driven out of Egypt, had strongly entrenched itself along the Suez Canal-Zaza-Beersheba line in Palestine. With the capture of Gaza on 7 November 1917 in which the Mysore and Patiala Lancers played an important role, the enemy was compelled to abandon his strong fortifications and to fight it out in the open. Jerusalm fell on 8/9 December as the enemy retreated in panic; He could not, however, be pursued as the Allies had almost out-run their lines of communications and some consolidation and reorganisation had now become necessary. For this the Expeditionary Force went into defence.

It was at this stage that the Ist J&K Infantry (Raghu Pratap) joined General Allenby's Force in Palestine. On arrival it was allotted to the 30th Brigade of the 10th Division which formed part of the XX Corps.

Before the Allies could go on the offensive against the Truks in Palestine, the Germans launched their great offensive in France in April 1918 forcing the Allies to fall back on Amiens. To meet the critical situation that had been created in Europe, a substantial portion of the troops in Palestine, (mainly British), were were pulled out and despatched to the western front in France. The defensive posture was thus continued in Palestine while replacements from India were being from India awaited. The 3rd Kashmir Rifles (Raghunath) arrived in Palestine towards the middle of July 1918 as part of this programme of replacement. The Battalion was allotted to XXI Corps as part of 232nd Brigade of 75th Infantry Division.

In order to give time to the newly arrived units to familiarise themselves with the desert and receive some hurried training in this new type of warfare, the general offensive of the Egyptian Expedition Force in Palestine was postponed till the middle of September that year. While the new units in the theatre were undergoing training, the older ones continued to hold the defensive line. Consequently the Ist Battalion which had arrived in March 1918 had to remain on the defensive line right up to the middle of September. Its work during this period was very much appreciated by the various commanders under whom it was serving. In a message to the Battalion on 17 July 1918 Commander 30 Infantry Brigade conveyed the appreciation of the Corps Commander in the following workds:-

"The corps commander has directed that his thanks be conveyed to you for the excellent and continued work which has been carried out on the defensive line".

Adding his own word of praise the Brigade Commander wrote

that "he would like it made known to all ranks, how pleased he is also at the cheerful and energetic way the work on the defence line has been carried out".[47]

Even as the Battalion was on the defensive role it was required to support an offensive operation carried out by the 29th Brigade of the Division on night 12/13 August 1918. The Divisional Commander in his letter of appreciation highly commended the valuable service the Battalion rendered in connection with the suffessful operation of the 29th Brigade. In his message the GOC wrote that "the regiment was given a thankless task, it succeeded nevertheless in successfully occomplishing its object in holding up a superior force of the enemy and in preventing him from reinforcing the enemy opposed to 29th Brigade". During this action Subedar Shiv Ram and Havildar Mansa Ram were wounded but they remained on duty till the end of the operation.[48]

Subedar Shiv Ram's gallantry and devotion to duty was duly recognised by an award of IDSM. Others whunded in action were Naik Chhuni Ram and Sepoys Chamel Singh and Natha Singh. The Battalion had helped in the capture of 228 prisoners and 13 Machine guns by 29 Brigade.[49]

It was not before September 1918 that the British could launch their offensive against the Turks in Palestine. Theoratically Allenby's front extended from Meding to Jaffa (Tel Aviv) but in practical terms the enormous length of the right flank could be disregarded and he could concentrate on the front stretching from Arsuf, north of Jaffa, to a point on the Jordon, south of Nablus,

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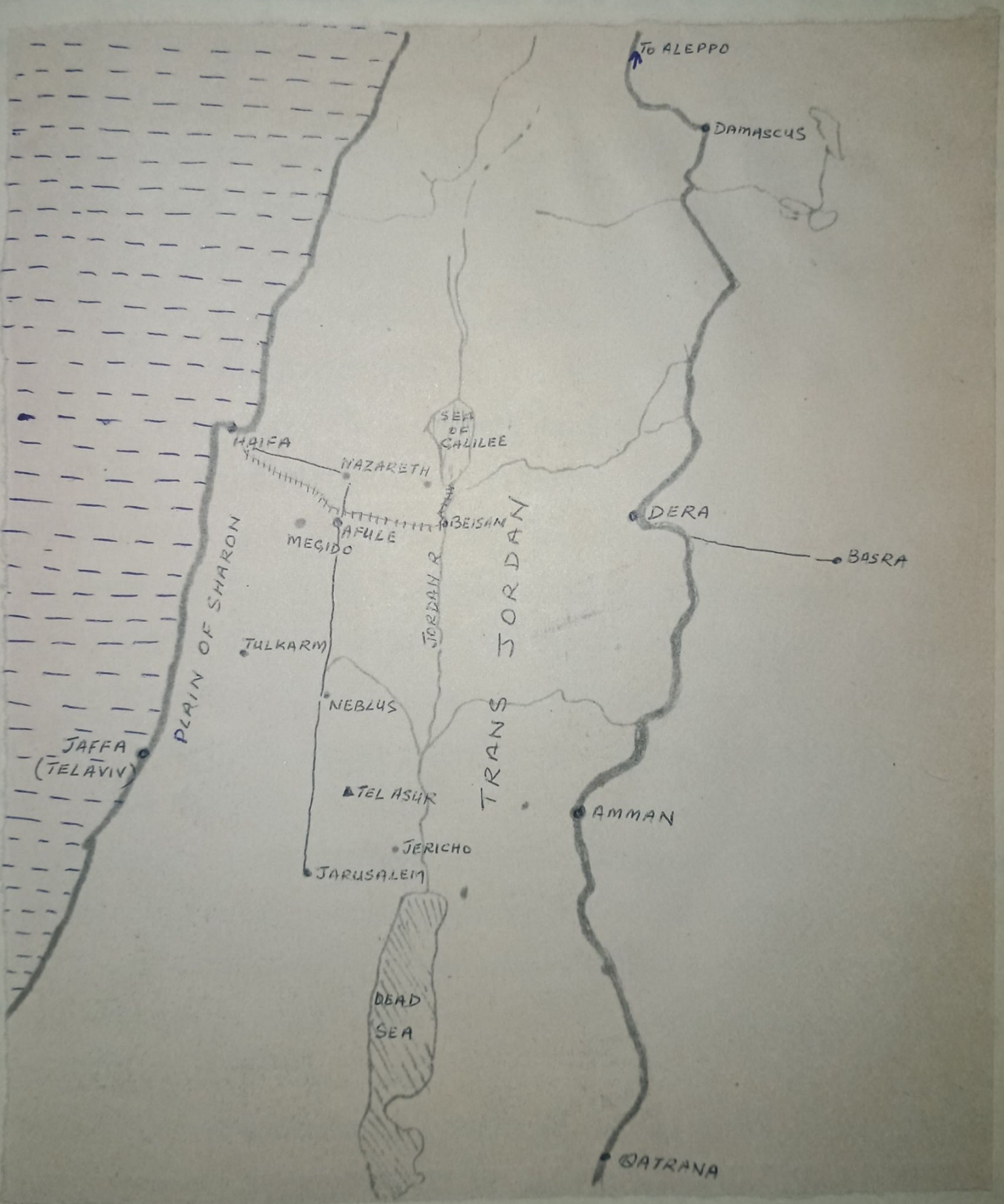
47. Jammu Archives Mil Block G-36 of 1928
48. Ibid
49. Ibid

onwards to the Deadd Sea. The left wing of this front lay on the coast in the plains of Sharon which further north widend into the plain of Dothan, and farther north still, through the Musmum Pass, into the plains of Magiddo. This country was ideally suited to the employment of cavalry in which General Allenby had enormous superiority. To the east the Judean hills and the valley of the Jordon was country over which only infantry could operate successfully. Consequently the plan which was evolved was that a great strength of the infantry was to be concentrated on the coast and in the centre while only a thin line of troops was to hold the right wing. With this over whelming strength on the left a smashing blow was to be delivered and after the resistance on this flank had been thus broken down, the troops were to pivot on a point in the centre of the line and swing north-east. The exteme left was to strike at Tulkarm, over 12 miles from its starting point. By this means the Turks would be forced to withdraw eastwards, but as the attack progressed, so the centre of the British line was to move slowly forward compelling the enemy to retire northwards as well. The far right flank was meanwhile to make a sudden thrust forward and close the Jordon corrssings to all Turkish forces on the west bank. In this way the greater part of the Turks would be surrounded on three sides. The main point of the plan was that which was aimed at closing the fourth side in the north. It was planned that after the infantry on the coast had flung back the Turks to the east, the masses of British davalry were to strike northwards up the plains of Sharon as soon as the corridor became wide enough for them to pass through. Their objectives were to be El Affule and Nazareth, (the Turkish headquarters), and after cutting the railway at the former place a cordon was to be flung due east across the country to Beisan and then pushed down sourth to the Jordon to link up with the line of British troops pushing up from the sourth. On the cavalry action

PALESTINE - AREA OF OPERATIONS 1918



depended the success of the plan. Their most distant objectives were over 50 miles away and if the Turks were to be trapped those objectives had to be seized within 24 hours after the beginning of the attack on the coast. To deceive the Turks, most elaborate measures were taken to make it appear that the attack was being made up the Jordon valley and mock preparations were made in this sector on a large scale.

By 17 September, the concentration of British forces in keeping with the plan of attack were completed. On the extreme right a small composite force under Major General Chaytor was left to defend the Jordon valley and protect the bridge heads. Next to that on the west bank was the XX Corps under General Chetwode with its two Divisions- the 53rd and the 10th on the east and west of the Nablus road respect -tively. The gap between them was filled by another small composite force under Lt Col Watson, whose duty it was to hold the centre while the 53rd and the 10th Divisions made converging attacks. To the left of the XX Corps was deployed the XXI Corps under General Bulfin. The infantry which occupied a line extending from the left flank of the 10th Division at Rafat to the coast at Arsuf was arranged in the following order:
On the extreme right was deployed the 54th Brigade, then came the 3rd, 75th and the 7th Divisions, while on the coast itself was the 60th Division. Behind XXI Corps lay the Desert Mounted Corps consisting of the 4th and 5th Cavalry Divisios, the 5th Light Horse Brigade and the Australian Mounted Division.

The main attack through the plain of Sharon began at 4.30 a.m. on 19 September. The 232nd Brigade of the 75th Division (which the 3rd Kashmir Rifles had joined a few days earlier after month and a half's training at Ladd (in Egypt) and Rantis hills), swept through the enemy's front line trenches but as its leading battalions reached Et Tire, they met with over whelming fire and could not make any further headway. The

3rd Battalion which was the Brigade reserve, was then ordered to reinforce the attack and under this renewed pressure the Turks were forced out of Et Tire. Thereafter the enemy was pursued for 12 miles in which the Raghunaths took full part. The Battalion suffered ten casaulties which included two killed. Jemadar Bom Bahadur came up for special mention by the Commander-in-Chief Egypt force for cospicuous brevery displayed by him on that day.[50]

The other formations along the coast had also fared well and within three hours of the start of the attack XXI Corps had succeeded in creating a wide gap through the enemy defences- wide enough for the cavalry divisions (which included the Mysore and Patiala lancers) to gallop through on their wide encircling movement. The success of the XXI Crops attack was also a signal for the start of the offensive by XX Crops. There appears to have been some confusion during the advance of 30th Brigade due to a traffic jam along the route caused probably by misinterpretation of orders and the Raghu Pratap nearly missed the great opportunity of taking and the part in the main attack of XX Crops. This is apparent from the report on the operation by the senior SSO with the Battalion. How, with great effort and enthusiasm on part of all ranks, the Battalion was able to make it to the forming up place minutes before the attack, make an interesting story. The report of the SSO on theevent is, therefore, reproduced below :-

"All ranks made light of the extreme difficulties entailed by the Regiment being the rear most unit of a brigade making a forced march by night with all its pack transport, difficulties enhanced by batteries and units of another brigade cutting in on narrow road. Realising that in order to participate in the

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50. Ibid

impending action a more rapid march was essential at all costs, if the unavoidably lost distance of three miles was to be regained, he (SSO) called upon the leading 'B' Company to push forward with all speed, sending orders to the remaining three companies, C,D and A Coys, to follow on as rapidly as possible. The leading company forced marched for 3 miles until the tail of the Brigade was reached. At this moment he (SSO) was sent for by the GOC who ordered to bring the Battalion into action. He (SSO) explained that it was with the greatest of difficulty that he had managed to force march to arrive in time with one company, but knowing the splendid spirit animating all ranks he hoped it would not be long before the remainder companies arrived. To his surprise on returning to call 'B' Company he was informed that the C,D & A companies had come up in time to deploy for the attack. The Battalion therefore participated in this most successful operation in the war. Words fail him (SSO) to express his..... admiration for the endurance and resolution displayed by each enabling him to bring the Battalion into action when ordered to do so".[51]

The 10th Division operating to the west of the road stormed a series of fortified hills north east of Tell Asur and advanced to a point about 3 miles east of Tirmus Aya which lay two miles from the road. By the evening of 19 September it was plain that Alenby's plan was developing into a sweeping victory with amazing rapidity. While the left wing had got astride the railway well to the east of Tulkarm/Lydda road, XX Corps marching over the very trying country west of the Jordon and over-coming considerable resistance had reached some 8 miles from Nablus. By 21st September the Turkish rs resistance had almost ceased and their retreat had turned into a rout. Although the main blow had been struck byXXI Corps the rapid movement

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51. Ibid

of the XXth had contributed in no small measure to this result. The performance of the 10th Division in advancing well over 20 miles, fighting throughout, with two sleepless nights, and specially the initiative of the GOC Major General Greer in ignoring the presence of strong enemy army forces on the hills and marching straight on Asmuth, was responsible for driving many hundreds of the enemy into the net cast by General Allenby.

On 26th September commenced the invasion of Syria and the Cavalry advanced rapidly to capture Damascus on 01 October without much opposition. The infantry in the meanwhile had captured the port of Haifa and by 8th October, taken possession of Beirut. The advance to Aleppo was then ordered and the 15th Cavalry Brigades, of which the Mysore Lancers formed part, entered the city on 26 October. Here they were informed that the last body of the Turkish troops to leave the town had retreated along the Alexandretta road. Without halting in Aleppo the 15th Cavalry Brigade therefore, pushed straight on in chase of the fugitives. The advance guard of the Jodhpur and the Mysore Lancers trotting up a slight rise suddenly came under machine gun fire. The Mysore Lancers (including the troops of Kashmir Lancers) charged the enemy in face of heavy Machine gun fire and captured the position; killing 50 of the enemy and taking 20 prisoners of war. This was the last action of the campaign and the only one in which some real check on the British advance had been inflicted by the Turks every since they had been routed from their defences in the beginning of the Campaign. Interestingly this was a position occupied by the resolute Turkish commander Mustapha Kamal Pasha who was to be Turkey's dictator after the war.

On 31st October the advancing cavalry had occupied Muslimya north of Aleppo without opposition and on the same day Armistice with Turkey came into operation. In Just over a month Turkey had thus suffered a defeat which was perhaps without parallel in military

history. Of her armies which once numbered 3,000,000, barely 500,000 remained. 325,000 were estimated to have been killed, 240,000 had died of disease, 1500,000 had deserted and 75,000 had been made prisoners of war. Allenby had reasons to feel elated as he had achieved all this at a cost of only 5,666 casualties among his troops.

By the end of 1918 the troops from Palestine and Syria were withdrawn to Egypt. A victory march past was held at Cantara during which General Allenby reviewed the formations which had taken part in the recently concluded operations. As recorded by the senior SSO the fine performance of the Raghupratap Battalion at the review of the 10th Division was much appreciated by the C-in-C Egypt, who specially congratulated the senior SSO on the march past of the Regiment as being the best of any unit in the Division. The SSO ~~was also~~ has also gone on record that he was specially congratulated by the C-in-C for the wonderful achievement of the Regiment on 20th/21st September 1918 when it doubled over 3 miles after a forced march by night so as not to be left out of battle.[52]

By the beginning of 1919, the Ist Kashmir Infantry, 3rd Kashmir Rifles, and the two troops of Kashmir Lancers were on their way home from Egypt after winning Laurels for themselves. The 3rd Battalion reached Satwari on 16 February 1919 while the Ist reached here on 2 March. A reception was accorded to the latter on its arrival at Karachi by the local public and the Army Welcome Committee. But the warmest reception to the units returning from the War was accorded by the Kashmir Durbar and the people of the State at the Jammu Railway Station as they kept on arriving one by one. A grand parade was held at Satwari Cantt on 6 March 1919 where all troops were inspected by His Highness the Maharaja accompanied by the Resident. These troops included the Ist Kashmir Mountains Battery which

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52. Ibid

returned from Quetta in February 1919.[53]

The services rendered by the Kashmir Imperial Service Troops were highly appreciated by the Governor General in Council and the Commander-in-Chief Indian Army. During the war in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria the units of the State Force had added to the high tally of honours and awards earned during the East African Campaign. Lt Col Ishri Singh Officer Commanding the Ist Kashmir Infantry and Major Onkar Singh were awarded OBI 2nd Clas while three other rank of the Battalion earned the IDSM. A good haul of awards was made by the Kashmir Lancers with Jemadar Hazra Singh and three other rank (one posthumous) received the IDSM and one sowar being awarded the Meritorious Service Medal. Defadar Gajinder Singh was mentioned in Despatches for gallantry. Six awards, when only two troops had participated in the war, is indeed creditable.[54]

THE THIRD AFGHAN WAR

While the Great War was coming to an end and an early peace was in sight trouble arose in Afghanistan which ultimately took the form of the 3rd Afghan War. The attitude of Afghanistan during the Great War had indeed given cause for anxiety to the British more than once, but on the whole, Amir Habib Ullah had, despite conflicting interests, adopted a not too anti-British stand. As a matter of fact it was because of him that the Turco-German Mission which went to Kabul in October 1915, had not succeeded. It was also perhaps because of his pro-British stance that a faction opposed him had taken root in Afghanistan. This faction was led by his own brother Nasar Ullah and Aman Ullah. Finding their opportunity they got Habibullah murdered on February 1919, while he was on a shooting trip to Jalalabad. Then started the struggle between the brothers for the throne. First Nasarullah proclaimed himself as the Amir of Afghanistan but within a few days Aman Ullah having secured the support of most of the

53. J&K Administrative Reports 1918-20
54. Jammu Archives Mil Block No.36 of 1928 file 00-81/84-85

tribal chiefs was able to dislodge Nasarullah and get to the throne himself on 28 February 1919. This was where the trouble started. Amir Amanullah in order to secure his position by diverting the minds of the people else where, made plans to attack India. Just then political disturbance broke out in Punjab in April 1919 and taking advantage of British pre-occupation, he quietly moved his troops towards the Khyber Pass and Kurrum Valley area.[55] On 3rd May he committed the first act of aggression when he entered Indian territory and occupied the Bagh Springs. Thereafter the Afghans occupied the Kafir Kot ridge and cut the water supply to Landi Kotal.

The official declaration of war was made on 6 May when the Indian Government ordered general mobilisation. On 10 May the Military Advisor Indian State Forces wrote to the Prime Minister of Kashmir to recall from leave men of the Raghupratap and the Body Guard Battalions Dimobilisation of Raghupratap was halted and its re-mobilisation ordred with immediate effect. The Body Guard was not to mobilise till further orders but was to be kept ready for carrying out Gilgit relief at an early date. The troops at Sherda were ordered to remain there while those at Muzaffarabad were to move to Srinagar. The Resident in Kashmir wired the Resident in Nepal to recall all Gorkhas of the Raghupratap and the Body Guard on leave there.[56]

The Ist Battalion completed it mobilisation by 9 June 1919. By then the British force that had been moved up from Peshawar had been able to, not only check the Afghan intrusions into Indian territory, but also to evict the enemy from Indian soil after a decisive action at Dakka. The Amir had sued for peace on 31st May and the armistice had been signed on 3rd June. However, as the formal peace treaty had not yet been signed, it was decided to continue the induction of troop

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55. Draft History J&K Rifles pp 119-123
56. Jammu Archives Mil Block A-84 of 1919 file no Nil.

into the North West Frontier Province as planned. Troops were also required in the Province to control the turbulence among the tribals, that had resulted from the Afghan War. Consequently the move of the Ist Battalion was not withheld and the Battalion accompanied by the usual complement of British SSO's left Jammu for Abbottabad on 10 June 1919. The mobilised strength of the Battalion was 821 combatants. Capt Bhatia was detailed as the Medical Officer and 12 Dolibearers/Kahars, (stretcher bearers), enrolled locally, were attached to the Battalion before its move. An Infantry Depot was maintained at Satwari arranging reinforcements at the scale of 25% of the field service strength.[57]

Along with the Ist Kashmir Infantry, the Ist Kashmir Mountain Battery was mobilised for operations in East Persia. The Battery left Jammu for Quetta on 15 June 1919. After being organised into a six gun battery it left for Duzgah in Persia towards the end of June. From here the Battery marched to Seistan in East Persia where it joined the British East Persian Force.

Meanwhile the man of the Body Guard had been recalled from leave and the Battalion was moved to Khundru for its onward move to Gilgit for relieving 2/2 Kashmir Rifles there. Unfortunately due to break down of transport arrangements, which was a civil responsibility till then, the Battalion could not proceed to Gilgit right then and it returned to Satwari. The 2/2 Kashmir Rifles had therefore, to continue its vigil in Gilgit during the Afghan War. To meet any contingency, particularly that of reinforcing Chitral, the larger portion of the Battalion was mobilised and two companies were despatched to Gupis fort immediately. Subsequently the 1/2 KR (Body Guard) was also moved upto Gilgit; not as relief of the 2/2 as planned earlier but to stengthen the out posts on the Gilgit Frontier. 4 Maxim and 12 Lewis gu guns with ample ammunition were provided to the Gilgit Garrison for

57. Ibid Mil Block E file 397-M-87.

its defence.[58]

THE END OF THE GREAT WAR

While the Imperial Service Troops were thus deployed in connection with the Afghan war and the trouble in Persia, the Great War came to an end with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. Information regarding the signing of the Treaty reached the State on 29 June 1919 and the consequent peace was heralded by the booming of a 101 gun salute by the Garrison Battery at Srinagar. 19th July, the day fixed for the commemoration of the event in Great Britain, was observed as a public holiday in the State and one of great celebrations in Srinagar, the summer capital. The city was decorated with flags and buntings, military and school sports were held and the poor were fed at government expense. A public meeting was held at which the terms of the Treaty were read out while a special Durbar was held at the Green Hall of the Mandi Palace Jammu where sanads, badges etc were distributed to officials and subjects who had rendered valuable services in connection with the War. Five officers and 13 NCOs and men were detailed to attend the Peace celebrations in England.[59]

PEACE WITH AFGHANISTAN

The Afghanistan War officially came to an end when a peace treaty with Afghanistan was signed on 8 August 1919. The Kohat Kurram Force, however, continued to operate in the North West Frontier and alongwith it the Raghupratap. During the Battalions stay with the Force ~~the 1st Battalion~~ it upheld the tradition of the J&K State Force and its work was highly commended by the formation Commander under whom it served. Names of Subedar Rawel Singh, Havildar Mansa Ram and NK Feroz Din were specially brought to the notice of the

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58. J&K administrative Report 1919-20
59. Ibid

C-in-C for the good work done by them. The Battalion suffered a total of one Officer and one sepoy killed and four sepoys wounded in operations against the tribals. Reinforcement of 150 Dogras, 32 Gorkhas and 38 Mussalmans were despatched to the Battalion on 12 September and it was only in early May next year that the Battalion was allowed to leave the Kohat Kurram Force and return to the State; reaching Satwari on 6 May, 1920. A warm welcome awaited the troops at the railway station. Besides, the large numbers of military and civil officials being present, state coaches stood in attendance at the station as a matter of honour, as per the custom of those days.[60]

The Ist Battery returned into the State on 15 November 1920. It did not see much action during its stay at Seistan nor at Mashad to which place it had subsequently moved but its work otherwise was very much appreciated by those with whom it served. As a mark of such appreciation the Battery Commander, Major Atta Mohammand, was awarded OBI 2nd Class while a good number of the other rank including CQMH Sher Baz Khan, Hav Dharam Singh and Hav Beli Ram, were honoured with the Meritorious Service Medal each.[61]

Although not directly involved in the Afghan war, the newly raised 2/2 Kashmir Rifles, had rendered valuable service in keeping vigil on the Gilgit frontier and in remaining in a state of readiness during the crucial period. When the war came the Battalion was due to be relieved, having put in more than two years in Gilgit. The war had lengthened its high altitude tenure and the extra commitments which the Battalion was required to fulfil as a result of the war put a great strain on the men's endurance but they bore it all cheerfully. After the threat to Gilgit had ceased, the Battalion rendered even more valuable service in escorting convoys carrying huge qualities of arms,

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60. Jammu Archives Mil Block A-84 of 1919

61. Jammu Archives GOCC- 10 of 1920 and GOCC-79 of 1920.

ammunition and military equipment sent by the Inspector General to Chitral via Gilgit. In appreciation of the good work done by the Battalion during the Afghan war and after, Lt Col Janak Singh Officer Commanding the unit, was awarded ~~OBI~~ OBI 2nd Class.[62]

"Afghanistan 1919" was awarded as a Battle Honour to units involved in the 3rd Afghan war. These included the 2/2 Kashmir Rifle and the 2nd Kashmir Mountain Battery deployed in Gilgit during the war. In fact all troops located across the Indus in Gilgit became eligible for the medal. Besides, 50% increase in pay of officers, and Indian Army rates of pay for the other rank were sanctioned for the duration of the war.[63]

THE INVALID AND THE WOUNDED

One of the major problems before the State authorities after the war was the rehabilitation of the large number of troops invalided during the war. It must be said to the credit of the authorities concerned that the problem was most sympathetically handled and hardly any invalid was discharged from service. Suitable jobs were found for some in the Forts department and other places of Static duty, while others were absorbed in civildepartments on jobs like forest guards, chowkidars at Dak Bunglows and store keepers etc.[64] To honour the war invalids, silver war badges (Imperial Cipher pierced within a circle) bearing the inscription, "For King and Empire— services rendered" were issued to each by the Government of India. Each badge bore a serial number and it was to be worn only with civil clothes on the right breast or the right lapel of the Jacket (Coat). A certificate issued with the badge was to be carried on person of the individual wearing the badge.[65] Paras 470 and 471 of Kashmir Service Regulations which fixed minimum period in a rank for

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62. J&K Administrative Report 1919-20
63. Jammu Archives Mil Block E-47 of 1930 file no 377-M-87
64. Ibid Mil Block A-54 of 1916 ~~xxxx~~ file no. 47-M/78
65. Ibid Mil Block A-79 of 1917 file no nil.

pension of that rank were suspended and the invalids could now be pensioned off in the rank last held at the time of invalidation, irrespective of the years of service in that rank.[66]

The war wounded who were retained in service were given the honour of wearing a strip of gold Russia braid two inches in length attached perpendicularly on the left sleeve of the jacket to mark each occasion on which wounded. The gold braid and the sewings were to be obtained free on indent from Army clothing Department.[67]

WAR MEMORIALS

India's contribution towards the winning of the War had been immense. This was gratefully acknowledged by the British and the British Indian Government, openly, on a number of occasions. With such a large number of Indians having sacrificed their lives for the cause, it was but appropriate that a befitting war memorial be constructed at Delhi, the capital of India. Consequently the construction of the all India war memorial in the form of a structure to be called the India Gate was started; the foundation stone of which was laid by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales on 11 February 1921. One Indian Officer and two other ranks each from the Kashmir Lancers, 1st Kashmir Mountain Battery, 1st Kashmir Infantry and 2nd and 3rd Kashmir Rifles were detailed to attend the foundation stone laying ceremony.[68]

With a view to commemorate the War throughout India, the Indian Soldiers Board decided that memorials be erected in villages which had supplied considerable number of recruits. The memorial was to take the form of a metal slab with a stereotyped inscription (in which space was left for recording the number of men that had joined the armed forces from that village during the war and the number that had been

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66. Ibid Mil Block A-18 of 1917 file no 23M/74 of 1917
67. Ibid Mil Block B-66 of 1917 file no nil.
68. Ibid Mil Block A-43 of 1920 file No 50 M-77

killed) erected on a suitable site in the village with possibly a flag staff attached, upon which the union Jack might be flown on war commemoration days.

The Jammu and Kashmir State, less the Poonch area, was allotted 6 such tablets free of cost. The six villages selected for the creation of war memorials on the basis of the recruits supplied by each during the war were as under:-[69]

Sr.No.	Village	Tahsil/Distt	No. of Recruits	Killed in action.
1.	Palanwala	Akhnoor Jammu	97	8
2.	Dharal	Rajauri Jammu	60	5
3.	Chhatroh	Mirpur- Jammu	52	Not ascertained
4.	Danna Kachili	Muzzafarabad-Kashmir	27	nil
5.	Batal	Bhimber-Jammu	250	43
6.	Shigar Kala	Skardu-Ladakh	10	-

A central war memorial at Jammu in the form of a gateway to a park with an arch connecting two towers appears to have been planned by the State. The area selected for the park was to be one north of Tawi and between Bagqi Khana (present Exhibition grounds), Power Station, and the Prince of Wales College (now Gandhi Memorial Science College); probably the area presently known as the Company Bagh. The foundation stone was to be laid by the Prince of Wales during his visit to Jammu in 1921. There is, however, no evidence of the memorial having ever come up.[70]

OTHER ACTIVITY DURING THE WAR

Appointments

During the period of the Great War it was all quiet on the State' frontiers and the State authorities were able to concentrate on the war effort unhindered. Raja Hari Singh having completed his education at Mayo College returned to the State and took over the charge of Commander-in-Chief of the State Force from Maharaja Pratap Singh on

69. Ibid Mil Block A-52 of 1919 file No 87M/75 of 1919
70. Ibid Mil Block A-30 of 1922 file No 52M/78.

10 September 1915. The youthfull C-in-C then went about his duties in a very energetic and enthusiastic manner. It was, in fact, primarily due to his forcefulness that the many concession to soldiers could be pushed through with speed against much oppositions from the civil administration. In recognition of his services Raja Hari Singh was knighted with the title of 'Sir'. In 1917-18 he was taken on the personal staff of the viceroy as Honorary A.D.C. In the subsequent year he was attached to 18 Lancers as an Honaray Captain, Lieut Col (later Brigadier) JL Rose held the office of the Military Advisor to the C-in-C till 13 March 1920 when Major (later Colonel) R D Alexander took over from him. Lt Col Ishar Dass had earlier taken over as the Military Secretary from Rai Bahadur Colonel Dewan Kishen Das, who had been elevated to the post of Home Minister with an honorary rank of Major General.[71]

Training and Dispositions

Training remained to be the major activity of the army during this period. All available troops of the Imperial Service Corps were put through training based on the lessons being learnt during the war, at Khundru camp each year. All the units were well reported upon as regards their professional efficiency.

The Regular army continued to be a neglected lot, both with regard to pay and allowances, as well as equipment. Most of them were still armed with the old muzzle loading Enfield rifles. Of the three infantry regiments two were located in Srinagar and one at Jammu. The Garrison Battery was located at Srinagar while the Horse Artillery remained stationed at Jammu. The Sappers and Miners also stayed at Jammu when not engaged on construction work. The bulk of the Body,

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71. J&K Administrative Reports 1915-20

Guard Cavalry was permanently located at Jammu while a detachment moved to Srinagar during summer with the Durbar and returned with it before the start of winter as a matter of yearly routine.[72]

Discipline

Discipline among the Imperial Service Troops was well maintained and considering the poor service conditions of the 'Regulars', their discipline could also be considered as satisfactory. There was, however, a rise in the cases of absence without leave and overstayal of leave. As a counter measure good conduct pay was introduced as in the Indian Army. This replaced the system of long service pay in which there was no provision for deduction on account of bad discipline. Desertions from service also continued as hitherto before and few took advantage of the pardon being granted to those who rejoined voluntarily.[73] It is difficult to say why desertions took place. War certainly was not the reason because desertions had been taking place ever since the British took defacto charge of the army and not particularly during the war. Besides, it is difficult to believe that the Dogras with hundreds of years of martial tradition behind them were deserting to avoid going to war. It may be noted that even as desertions were continuing, thousands were thronging the recruiting offices for joining the army while in full knowledge of the large number of casualties, suffered by the units at war. The only plausible reason seems to be the one noted earlier, that the men, specially the older lot who had seen different days under their own commanders could not adjust themselves to the changed environment.

Pay and allowances

War concessions having been withdrawn after the war, a general

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72. Ibid
73. Ibid

increase in the pay and allowances of the soldier was made with a view to improve his service conditions. Commissioned Officers were given the concession of taking their full dress uniform home on retirement, so that they may wear it while attending Durbars and other State functions after retirement.[74]

Health and Medical

During the war there was a big requirement for ensuring a continuous flow of drafts of healthy soldiers to the front to replace the casualties, due to war and disease, that returned to the State at regular intervals. The troops in the State had, therefore, to be protected against cholera, small pox, Plague and influenza that attacked the civil areas off and on. The Military Medical Department performed this great task admirably well. While there were 7 deaths due to cholera in Srinagar cantonment in 1914-15 the first year of the war, troops enjoyed complete immunity from the epidemic when it swept the civil areas the following year. The troops in Jammu cantonment remained fully protected against plague when it hit the Jammu town and the suburban areas in 1915-16. It was, however, not always possible, inspite of best efforts, to prevent epidemics raging in civil areas from spilling over to the cantonment. When that happened the Medical Department fought hard to contain the scourge to a few cases. So when small-pox made an appearance in Srinagar cantonment area in 1916-17 it was restricted to just 3 cases, none of which proved fatal. The Medical Department's toughest fight against disease was, however, to take place in 1918-19 when influenza in Jammu civil areas spread to the Cantonment and effected 286 soldiers. It was finally stamped out after a strenuous effort but by then it had taken a tool of 32 lives. Cholera made an appearance in Srinagar Cantonment in 1919-20 but it was checked under the watchful eye of Lt Col (Lieut Colonel) Duni Chand, Senior Medical

74. Ibid

Officer in Srinagar, and none of the few cases proved fatal. Lt Col Duni Chand's efforts were greatly appreciated by the authorities. One of the reasons for the epidemics repeatedly making appearances in Cantonment areas was that troops, being local, it became very difficult to isolate them completely from the Civil. The second reason was the poor state of living barraks from medical and sanitary points of view; especially at Srinagar.[75]

Ist Line Transport Corps

It may be recalled that Ist Line Infantry Transport Corps was raised in 1912-13 to provide Ist Line transport to units on mobilisation. At that time it had a total of 190 mules/ponies. The number of animals was subsequently raised to 202 mules/ponies and 110 riding horses in 1915-16. However, at the out break of the 3rd Afghan war when the Ist Battalion was required to move to the North West Frontier, it was found that about 175 mules/ponies were just sufficient for providing the Ist Line transport and for meeting the Battalions's requirement of mules for its Lewis guns. There were thus no mules left for the move of 2nd Kashmir Rifles to Gilgit and its move was greatly delayed. Fortunately the Gilgit frontier remained undisturbed, otherwise the inability of the 2nd Battalion to move might have proved catastrophic. The need for a well organised transport crops with animals sufficient for the mobiliation of two infantry battalions and a mountain battery had become apparent in view of the experience of the Afghan war. Consequently action was taken in hand to expand the army Ist Line Transport Corps. In order to overcome the financial stipulations it was suggested that the mules could be hired out to the civil when not in military use to make it a paying concern. A scheme for the reorganisation of the Breeding Stables on the lines of the Indian Remount Department was

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75. Ibid

also approved. The aim was to improve the supply of the Stables so as to make it adequate for meeting the entire military requirements of mules and horses.[76] The Parigram, Shilvat, Naugam, Buran, Majan, Kujar, Manasbal, Malgam and Gulam Ari Rakhs were placed at the disposal of the Breeding Stables. Four other Rakhs namely Gandak Shah, Arth, Sultansura and Voslipura were allotted to the Transport Corps. All these Rakhs were situated in the Kashmir Province. None from the Jammu Province were allotted for this purpose.[77]

Supply and Transport- Gilgit

Lieut Colonel A E Webb performed the duties of supply and transport officer on special duty for Gilgit. The fodder farms maintained in the Gilgit Agency showed marked improvement in production of fodder and grain. It was for the first time that the value of the outrun had begun to exceed the cost of cultivation.[78]

Honours and Awards

Colonel Anant Ram who was working as the Quarter Master General of the State Force during the period of the war was honoured with the title of Rai Bahadur on the new year's day 1920, as a mark of appreciation of the services rendered by him. The same day Colonel Jamak Singh was also conferred with the title of Rai Bahadur in recognition of his services while he was commanding the 2/2 Kashmir Rifles in Gilgit during the crucial period of the Afghan War.[79] Unitwise tally of awards won during the Great War is as under[80]:-

1. Army Headquarters and Brigade Staff

(a) Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire(CIE)- 1
(b) Officer of the Order of British India (OBI) Ist cl- 2

2. Ist Kashmir Mountain Battery

(a) OBI Ist Class — — — — — — 1
(b) Indian Order of Merit (IOM) — — — — — 2

76. Ibid
77. Jammu Archives, Mil Block A-18-1919 file no nil
78. J&K Administrative Reports for years 1915 to 1920
79. Ibid
80. Jammu Archives, Mil Block 'B'- 36 of 1928 file no 80-81/84-85

(c) Indian Distinguished Service Medal (IDSM) - 1

(d) Indian Meritorious Service Medal (IMSM) - 19

3. Kashmir Lancers

(a) IDSM - - - - - 2

(b) IMSM - - - - - 2

4. Ist Kashmir Infantry (Raghu Pratap)

(a) CBI 2nd Class - - - - 2

(b) IOM - - - - - 3

(c) IDSM - - - - - 3

5. 2nd Kashmir Rifles (Body Guard)

(a) CIE - - - - - 1

(b) OBI Ist Class - - - - 1

(c) IOM - - - - - 3

(d) IDSM - - - - - 5

(e) IMSM - - - - - 9

(f) Croix-de-guerre (French) - - 1

(g) Order of St George IV Class (Russian) - 2

(h) Order of St Stanislas (Russian) with sword - 1

(j) Medaglia de Bronze al Valor Militare al (Italian) — 1

6. 3rd Kashmir Rifles (Raghunath)

(a) IOM - - - - - 4

(b) IDSM - - - - - 7

(c) IMSM - - - - - 8

(d) Croix-de-guerre - - - - 1

(e) ~~Italian award (?)~~ Medaglia de Bronze al Valor Militare al (Italian) - - - 1 ~~1~~

7. Kashmir Medical Department

(a) OBI 2nd class - - - - 2

In Aid to Civil Authority

There were two occasions when the troops were called out in aid to civil authority during the period under review. Once in January 1914 when 300 men of the Srinagar garrison were employed to extinguish the disasterous fire that broke out in Amirakadal on the 29th, after it had gone completely out of control of the fire brigade.[81] Second time it was in 1919 when 6 officers and 246 other ranks were employed under the Forest Department on duties connected with the prevention of Kuth smuggling.[82]

The State Band

The State Band about which such a lot has been written in the previous chapters, suffered a severe blow when Mr C J Burrow died in 1818.[83] He was succeeded by Mr A W Hansen, but the commonman continued to associated the name of Mr Burrow with the State Band long long after his death. In fact right upto 1947, it was not uncommon to hear people call the Band as "Barron (corruption of Burrow) sahib ka band".

The Allied Bazar

As a matter of general interest it may be mentioned that a complete set of uniform, arms and equipment of a soldier of the Kashmir Imperial Service Corps was sent from India to the Allied Bazar Organised in the United States of America in 1916-17, as representative of the uniforms worn by India's Imperial Service Troops.[84]

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81. Jammu Archives Mil Block B-25 of 1912
82. J&K administrative Report 1919-20.
83. Ibid 1918-19
84. Ibid 1916-17

CHAPTER VI

PERIOD OF MODERNISATION

REORGANISATION SCHEME 1921-22[1]

During the Great War it had been amply brought out that the State Forces were campable of performing a much higher role than just that of second line troops, provided they were properly organised and equipped. This fact was duly recognised and immediately after the war a process of reorganisation of all State Forces was set into motion. The aim was to bring about homogeneity in the varying organisations of the Forces of different States and to raise the general level of their efficiency so that they may be used as first line troops; not as a matter of expediency but as an intergal part of the plan for the defence of India. Consequently a complete and thorough over hauling of the Military Department in Kashmir was taken in hand in 1921-22. The main features of the great reorganisation as far as they effected the Kashmir State Force were as under :-

(a) Abolition of the rank of General.

(b) Creation of ranks of Lieutenants and Captains

(c) Organisation of the Remount and Lands Department.

(d) Amalgamation and disbandment of certain units.

(e) Disbandment of Sappers and Miners and raising of Pioneer Battalions.

(f) Reduction of certain forts and their establishments.

(g) Raising of a Training Battalion.

(h) General revision of pay and prospects of rank and file.

The entire State was divided into three Command Areas- viz Kashmir area, Jammu area, and the Gilgit area, each under the Command of a Colonel Commandant; Colonels Gandharab Singh, Gandip Singh and

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1. Based on J&K Administrative Report 1920 to 1924. and Jammu Archives Mil Block G-36-1928 file Go-E1/84-85.

Sobha Singh being put in the Command of the three areas respectively. The Imperial Service Troops were now designated as Ist Line Troops and the Regulars as the Ist Line Reserve Troops. The standard of efficiency aimed at was, however, to be in keeping with the need for economy and a general reduction in the strength of the Army was effected under a phased programme.

The 2/2 Kashmir Rifles which had been raised as a war battalion in 1917 was disbanded in 1921 and in its place the 4th Kashmir Training Battalion was raised. The Training Battalion was, however, disbanded just one year after its raising, as the system of reserves had not yet been introduced in the State.

A general increase in pay of all ranks was sanctioned under the reorganisation scheme. Rations and fuel allowances, hitherto considered as war concessions, were continued after the war. Kit allowance of the Ist Line Troops was raised from Rs. 20/- to Rs. 40/-. This was in addition to the "half mounting allowance" at Rs. 8/- per head per annum.

Even as the reorganisation scheme of 1921-22 was being implemented some rethinking appears to have been done, both with regard to the total strength of the army as well as the final shape that it was to take. By the time the scheme had been fully implemented in the year 1923-24, the ~~following~~ classification of troops into Ist Line and Ist Line Reserve had been dispensed with and the entire State Army had been brought on class 'A' basis ~~in order~~ so as to be able to effect an easy interchange of troops for duty on the Gilgit frontier. The proposed large scale reduction in the force level does not seem to have been implemented and by the end of 1923 there had been just a marginal decrease in strength from 7471 (that it was in 1920) to 6603 all ranks. Of this strength 5793 formed the Ist Line troops and 750 comprised the Auxillary Services. The Strength of the Army Headquarters stood at 60 all ranks. The strength of the army seems to have been fixed on the basis of the its role which was identified as' (a) ensuring internal

peace and security (b) frontier defence of Gilgit, and (c) rendering such assistance to the Imperial Government as occasions may demand. For the purposes of supervision of their training the Kashmir State Troops were placed in the Circle of the Military Advisor Punjab State Forces.

The reorganisation as it affected the various arms and the Auxillary Service was as noted in succeeding paragraphs:-

Artillery

The Kashmir Artillery was now organised into three batteries designated as the Kashmir Pack Batteries. The 1st and 2nd Mountain Batteries thus became the 1st and 2nd Kashmir Pack Batteries respectively. They were rearmed with 2.75" BL Guns. The 1st Battery was earmarked for Imperial Service in time of need and was provided with mules of the beststamp. The 3rd Pack Battery was formed by the amalgamation of the Horsed Artillery, the Garrison Battery and the Artillery Depot. The total strength of the Artillery after this reorganisation stood at 767 Combatants, 125 non-combatants, 476 mules and 48 horses.

Infantry and Pioneers

Of the three 'Regular' battalions, the 7th Fatech Shivji was converted into a pioneer battalion and designated as the 4th Kashmir Pioneers, the 8th Suraj Gorkhas was reorganised as the 5th Kashmir State Light Infantry while the 9th Ruder Shivnabh was disbanded. In place of the 9th another pioneer battalion, designated as the 6th Kashmir Pioneers, was raised. The manpower released by the disbandment of the Ruder Shivnabh was utilised for making up the strengths of the new 4th, 5th, and 6th Battalions. At the end of it all, the strengths of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Battalions, organised on four company basis, were 876,867, 864 and 816 respectively. The 5th Light did not exceed 658 all ranks and the 6th Pioneer was a mere 391 in strength. The two pioneer battalions were introduced

were introduced into the State Force with a view to improve, during peace time, road communications in the inaccessible and impassable strategic regions of the State. Services of a qualified British Officer, Major W.C Moore Lane were sought temporarily to organise the two pioneer battalions for maximum efficiency. When Major Moore Lane joined in July 1924 he was appointed as the Director Pioneers.

Kashmir Body Guard Cavalry

The squadron of the Kashmir Lancers which formed part of the Imperial Service Troops was amalgamated with the Body Guard Cavalry which was now organised as a full cavalry regiment on a non 'silladar' system on the lines of the Indian Cavalry. The reorganisation was carried out under the supervision of Sardar Bahadur Captain Hira Singh IDSM of the 19th Lancers who was appointed its Commanding Officer with the rank of Lieut Colonel. The strength of the Regiment at the time of its reorganisation in 1923 was only about 400 all ranks as against its authorised strength of 752. By 1926 it had its three squadrons functioning and the fourth squadron came up by 1928 or so.

The Training School

After the disbandment of the Training Battalion in 1922 a Kashmir Army Training School was organised in 1923 to carryout the training of probationary officers, and students earmarked for courses at the various Indian Army Schools of Instructions. More than 50 probationary officers and 100 odd students for courses in India were trained in this training school during the five years of its existence at the end of 1928.

The Temple Guards

It appears that guarding of temples in the State was the responsibility of the Military Department. This task seems to have been performed by the 'Regular' battalions. With the conversion of the 'Regulars' into 1st Line Troops they were taken off the duty of guarding temples which was thenon to be performed by the Temple Guards units raised for the purpose

About 100 strong, the unit consisted of re-employed exservicemen. The idea was to employ experienced men on low and meagre salaries. To make the job acceptable to the pensioners the concerning rules were amended so as to allow them to continue receiving their pensions even while empolyed as Temple Guards.

Kashmir Military Transport

As part of the reorganisation, the regimental transport of all the units was transferred to this unit and the strength was raised to 153 combatants, 27 followers and 360 mules. The unit which became a Lieut Colonel's Command was organised into three troops, each under a Jamadar. It continued to be commanded by its old Officer Commanding Captain Mohar Singh who was now elevated to the rank of a Lieut Colonel. He had under him a Captain as his second-in-command and a Lieutenant as the Transport Officer.

Remount and Lands Department

For making feed and fodder supply arrangements for the large number of animals on the army establishment a Remount and Lands Department was created. The Department was made responsible for the management of the army 'Rakhs' and Lands and also that of the breeding Stables. Some private 'Rakhs' and Land of the Maharaja namely Dhiansar, Bandowala, March and Kheri were added to the 'Rakhs' under the Remount and Lands Department, to enable it to meet the fodder requirements of the army.

Medical Department

The strength of Assistant Surgeons was raised to five and there were now two Majors, one Captain and two Lieutenants to look after the two military hospitals at Jammu and Srinagar. Besides these five Assistant Surgeons, there were to be eight sub-assistant surgeons in the rank of Subedars and seven in the rank of Jamadar. Subsequently in 1928 the strength of the Sub Assistant Surgeons was raised to

The State Band 1920-21 ? 1917
Maharaja Hari Singh's 1st marriage

Troops on exercise 1921

eighteen in all. These appointments were now graded; there being one Ist Senior Grade (Subedar Suchanand) five Ist Grade Subedars, two 2nd Grade Jemadars and 10 3rd Grade Jamadars.

Military Store

The post of the Superintendent Military Stores was done away with and the two Military Stores, one at Srinagar and one at Jammu, were put under the incharge of an Officer Commanding each who held the rank of Lieutenamt.

REORGANISATION- 1925-26[2]

The process of reorganisation which had been set into motion in 1923 was pursued even more vigourously by Maharaja Hari Singh who came to the throne on the death of Maharaja Pratap Singh in 1925. Immediately on ascending the 'Gaddi' Maharaja Hari Singh, who continued to function as the Commander-in-Chief of the State Force, sought to bring about some major changes in the higher command set up. The main feature of the reorganisation so conducted was the establishment of the Army Council and the complete over-hauling of the Army Headquarters set up in 1926.

Army Council

An Army Council composed of (a) Army Minister (b) Chief of Military Staff, and (c) Colonel on Staff was constituted in 1926. The appointment of the Army Minister was conferred upon Colonel Rai Bahadur Janak Singh with the rank of Major General. The appointment of the Chief of the Military Staff had already been created in 1923 on the obolition of the post of the Military Advisor as it existed then, and Major R D Alexander had switched over from the appointment of the Military Advisor to that of the Chief of Military Staff in the rank of a Lieut Colonel. He now became a member of the Military Council by virtue of his appointment. Colonel Hoshiar Singh was

2. Based on J&K administrative Reports 1925-27

appointed the Colonel on staff to become the third member of the Military Council by virtue of his appointment. The council had its separate secretary and this post was filled by Major Ghansar Singh. This Council was termed the Military Board in 1928-29 with its composition remaining the same. Captain N S Rawat took over as the secretary to the Military Board when Major Ghansar Singh was seconded to the Civil, as Director Visitor Bureau, for 3 years.

Army Headquarters

Changes of far reaching consequence were introduced in the organisation of Army Headquarters. Firstly, the post of Military Secretary was abolished and in its place a post of Deputy Chief of Military Staff was created. The entire office of the Military Secretary was converted into that of the Deputy Chief. Secondly, a new post of General Staff Officer (GSO) was created. The GSO was to have under him Director Military Training, Director Musketry, Director Signalling and Director Physical Training. The Officer Commanding the Artillery Regiment acted as the Director Artillery. Thirdly, the appointment of the Adjutant General was marged into that of the Quarter Master General and the new office was designated as the Adjutant and Quarter Master General's Office (AQ). Director Lands and Transport was created and placed under the AQ. Officers holding important portfolios at the Army Headquarters after its reorganisation were Colonel Durga Singh Sardar Bahadur who held the appointment of GSO, Lieut Colonel Rahmat Ullah Khan as Director Military Training and Lieut Colonel Khushal ~~Singh~~ Khan, as Director Artillery. The Officer Commanding the Training School functioned as the Director Musketry and at the time of this reorganisation this appointment was held by Captain Baldev Singh Pathania. Colonel Sher Ali Khan was appointed the AQ while Colonel Sarup Singh functioned as the Director Lands and Transport.

Area Commandants

As a measure of economy the post of the Colonel Commandant Gilgit Area was abolished in 1926 alongwith the connected staff, such as the Brigade Major and the Staff Captain. The post of the staff captain was in fact abolished in the other two commands also. The duties of the Colonel Commandant Gilgit Area were, hence forth to be performed by the Officer Commanding the infantry battalion in Gilgit, in addition to his duties as the battalion commander. Consequently Colonel Sansar Singh relinquished his appointment as the Colonel Commandant Gilgit Area and handed it over to Lieut Colonel Devi Singh who was then commanding the 1st Battalion in Gilgit. Colonel Sansar Singh then took over Kashmir Area while Colonel Onkar Singh shifted to Jammu Area vice Colonel Sarup Singh who, as we have seen, had taken over as Director Lands and Transport.

Strength of the Army

The second phase of the re-organisation which was started in 1923 was completed in 1926. The final shape that the State Army took at the end of this phase is given below. It may be noted that the total strength which was being sought to be reduced during the first phase of reorganisation (1921-22) ultimately exceeded the strength that it was at the end of the war.

(a) Army Headquarters	85	all ranks (incl non combatants)
(b) Commands (HQ)	25	-do-
(c) Body Guard Cavalry	752	-do-
(d) Three Pack Batteries	933	-do-
(e) Two Pioneer Regiments	1665	-do-
(f) Four Infantry Regiments	3538	-do-
(g) Training School	1616	-do-
Total First Line Troops	7014	-do-

(h) Corps of Temple Guards	104	All Ranks (incl non Combatants)
(j) State Band	102	-do-
(k) Transport and Supply Service	182	-do-
(l) Military Stores	47	-do-
(m) Medical Department	228	-do-
(n) Forts	123	-do-
(o) Breeding Stables	158	-do-
Total Auxillary Force:	943	-do-
Grand Total	7957	-do-

As a matter of interest the strength of the Kashmir State Army may be compared with those of other Major States as given below:-[3]

(a) Hydrabad -	2 Cavalry Regiments	- 1052	All Ranks
	1 Field Battery	- 181	-do-
	Three Inf Bns (Infantry Battalions)	- 2316	-do-
	One Trg Company (Training)	- 153	-do-
	TOTAL	- 3702	-do-
(b) Gwalior -	2 Cavalry Regiments	- 1523	-do-
	2 Mountain Batteries	- 416	-do-
	5 Infantry Bns (Battalions)	- 3471	-do-
	TOTAL	- 6048	-do-
(c) Mysore -	1 Cavalry Regiment	- 662	-do-
	1 Infantry Battalion	- 772	-do-
	TOTAL	- 1434	-do-

3. Jammu Archives Mil Block E-47 of 1930 file no 337-M-87

Class Composition

The class composition of all first line units was fixed as under:-

(a) Body Guard Cavalry	- Dogra Rajputs
(b) Ist Kashmir Pack Battery	- 50% Hindu Dogra and 50% Mohammadan Dogras
(c) 2nd Kashmir Pack Battery	- -do-
(d) 3rd Kashmir Pack Battery	- -do-
(e) Ist Kashmir Infantry (Raghupratap)	- Hindu Dogras
(f) 2nd Kashmir Rifles (Body Guards)	- 50% Gorkhas + 50% Hindu Dogras
(g) 3rd Kashmir Rifles (Raghunath)	- 50% Gorkhas + 50% Hindu Dogras
(h) 4th Kashmir Pioneers (Fateh Shivji)	- 50% Hindu Dogras + 50% Mohammadan Dogras.
(i) 5th Kashmir Light Infantry (Suraj Gorkha)	- Hindu Dogras.
(j) 6th Kashmir Pioneers	- 50% Hindu Dogra and 50% Mohammadan Dogras.

1. The auxillary units continued to have mixed class composition as hither-to-before.

Colonel-in-Chief Raghupratap

Interestingly His Highness Zubda- tul Mulk Mahakhan Dewan Nawab Sir Zalay Mohamad Khan KCIE, KCVO, the Nawab of Palampur was appointed the Colonel-in-Chief of Ist Kashmir Infantry (Raghupratap). He was probably given this honour by Mahraja Hari Singh at the time of his Raj Tilak' (January 1926). No other unit had this distinction of having a Colonel-in-Chief.

Increase in Promotion Prospects

One of the significant features of the reorganisation had been the creation of a large number of new appointments which resulted in promotions, particularly in the Officer rank, on an unprecedented scale.

Service Concessions

The Reorganisation of the Army also resulted in a number of

concessions to troops with regard to their pay and allowances. Some of the major concessions were as under :-

(a) Issue of free rations to the Gilgit garrison, which was discontinued after the war, was now restored.

(b) A half mounting allowance of Rs. 10/- per mensum in favour of all Indian Officers (as the Junior Commissioned officers were called) and men and Rs. 40/- per annum to those serving in the Cavalry was sanctioned.

(c) Provision of riding ponies at state expense for medical officers holding the rank of Captain, while marching with detatchments, was made.

Supply of Arms and Equipment

A universal rule for the supply of arms and equipment was formulated by the Government of India. Under the provisions of this rule the initial issue was to be made by the Goyernment of India and such equipment was to be remain oncharge of the Indian Government only upto the authorised proportions. Replacements were to be made on payment by the State concerned; credit to the value of unserviceable arms and equipment deposited being allowed to the state. Repairs to the arms and equipment were also to be at the expense of the respective state.[4]

Recruitment of Gorkhas

Kashmir State had been experiencing some difficulty with regard to the recruitment of Gorkhas for the State Force from Nepal through the British Indian recruiting agencies for quite some time past. Besides not receiving the requisite number, the state invariably got the left overs and the substandard recruits while the Indian Recruiting Depot gave first preference to the Indian Gorkha regiments. We have seen how in the past special recruiting teams were sent from Jammu to Nepal for picking up the best possible recruits from there. Now in order to ensure a continuous flow of Gorkha recruits, of appropriate standard, the State Government in 1929, obtained permission of the

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4. Ibid Block B-43 of 1923 file 31-1923

Indian Government for establishing its own recruiting depot at Gorkhapur on a permanent basis. The J&K Gorkha Recruiting Depot which ultimately came up at Gorkhpur was composed of one Gorkhas Officer, one clerk, one NCO and 6 Riflemen. Initially the Depot was accommodated in tents but in 1931 it was shifted to "Pucca" building specially constructed by the Government of India at a rent of Rs.612/- per year. Apparently the Depot proved to be very useful in recruiting the right type of Gorkhas for the two Rifle Regiments of the State.[5]

Badami Bagh Cantonment :

While the distinction between the Imperial Service Troops and the 'Regulars' lasted, little was ever done for improving the lot of the 'Regulars'. It has already been noted that while excellent accommodation wasbeing constructed for the IS Troops at Satwari, the Regulars continued to live in old deplapitated barracks under unhealthy and unhygenic conditions in Srinagar. The requirement for proper accommodation for the two 'Regular' battalions that were always stationed at Srinagar had of course been recognised but action was being deferred due to the financial limitations of the State. The requirement could no longer be ignored when, as a consequence of the reorganisation, all troops were categorised as Class 'A'. Consequently alongwith the scheme of reorganisation of 1923, was pushed through the scheme for the construction of well protected and safe Bells of Arms, decent barracks and quarters for Officers and Other Ranks at Srinagar, sufficient for about a brigade strength. An annual allotment of Rs. 4 Lakhs for a number of years was made for this purpose and this amount was definitely usefully spent. Within three years a beautiful cantonment had taken shape at Badami Bagh in Srinagar. Though not yet complete, the opening ceremony of the new Badami Bagh Cantonment was performed in October 1926 by Maharaja Hari Singh, whose brain child

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5. Ibid Block E-5 of 1929 file 297-M-86

the plan is believed to have been. The first unit to move into the new cantonment was the 5th Kashmir Light Infantry (Suraj Gorkha). The construction work in both the cantonment continued for the next few years and by 1933 adequate number of barracks, quarters, quarter guards and stores etc had been built to be able to provide, for the entire state army, accommodation which was considered by competent authorities as amongst the best in India. The Badami Bagh Cantonment besides providing the best accommodation for troops, presents, as it does even today, the most picturesque view; situated as it is on a gentle mountain slope covered with hundreds of almond trees.[6]

Abolition of the Military Board:

Although the reorganisation that was started in 1923 was officially considered to have been completed by 1926, the process of change and improvement continued beyond 1926 to merge with the second reorganisation scheme of 1933. Change of some consequence during this period was the abolition of the Military Board in 1929. This was done with the intention of bringing the military administration in direct touch with the civil administration. Consequently a civil post of an Army Minister was created and Major General Janak Singh was appointed to this post in addition to his appointment as the Public Works Minister. The Chief of Staff continued to be the executive head of the Army Department, being directly responsible to the Army Minister for the administration of the army. The post of Colonel on Staff was abolished and Colonel Hoshiar Singh was given a civil assignment of Political Secretary to the State Government. The Office of the Military Board had thus split into two- the Army Ministers Office and the Chief of Military Staff's Office. Major Ghansar Singh who had since reverted to the army from his civil assignment was appointed Secretary to the Army Minister. While Captain Narain Singh Rawat took over as the Staff Officer to the Chief of Staff.[7]

6. J&K Administrative Report 1930-33 and Jammu Archieves Mil Block R-11 of 1927 file 240-M-83
7. Jammu Archives Mil Block R-17 of 1929 file 201-M-86

Palace Guards

Also of significance was the raising of a squadron of Cavalry as the Place Guards, in January 1930. Major Balwan Singh became its Commandant. He had under him one Assistant Commandant (Captain Krishan Singh) one Lieutenant as Adjutant and another as the Quarter Master.

The Military Budget

The outstanding features of the reorganisation had been, firstly, the general increase in the strength of the army from 7471 in 1920 to 7957 in 1926; secondly, a general raise in the pay and allowances of all ranks; thirdly, creation of a large number of appointments for officers resulting in promotions on an unprecedented scale; fourthly, convertion of the 'Regular' battalions into first line troops; and fifthly large scale construction of accommodation for troops. It was therefore natural for the Military budget to shoot upw during this period. Military expenditure which totalled to Rs. 29,18,300/- in 1922, registered a rise of over five lakhs during 1923 the first year of the reorganisation, to reach the figure of Rs. 34,54,600/-. By the time the reorganisation had been completed in 1926 the military budget had risen by another 4½ lakhs of rupees. Subsequently as the process of reorganisation and construction continued for the next two years, the budget touched the peak figure of Rs. 46,26,000/- in 1928-29. With the total income of the State being Rs. ~~2,51,000/-~~ 25,100,000/- the expenditure on the army worked out to about 18% of the income which was considered very high and for this Maharaja Hari Singh came in for much criticism. The Military budget finally settled at Rs. 42,59,000/- in 1930-31 by which time the construction work in the two contonments had been completed.

DEPLOYMENT AND TRAINING[8]

Between 1921 and 1930 while most of the military activity was centred round the reorganisation that was taking place, training continued as usual. Of the three Pack Batteries ones remained posted

8. Based on J&K Administrative Reports 1921 to 1930.

at Gilgit, relief being carried out by the other two by rotation. Two batteries spent the summer months in Kashmir and the winter months in Jammu. In Kashmir they were located at Batmalu Camp and wayle camp while at Jammu they were encamped at Baran and Bari Brahmana. The batteries carried out their training in their respective camps. Nagrota continued to be the site for the main field firing range where even the British Indian units of the Sialkot Brigade carried out their firing practices. One of the other Kashmir Pack Batteries often joined the Indian Army Units for combined shooting on such occasions.

The infantry units were responsible for training their own recruits at unit locations in addition to exercising their sub-units. Only one battalion was now required to be located at Gilgit. Two were permanently located at Satwari and two at Srinagar. The 6th Pioneers spent half the year in Srinagar and the other half working on the Banihal Cart Road (BC Road) as part of their on-the-job training. It appears that the 4th Battalion (Fateh Shibji) although designated as a Pioneer Battalion never in fact functioned as such and it continued to perform duties of a regular infantry battalion; manning frontier posts in turn with other battalions. The Gilgit battalion occupied posts as under :-

(a) Astor-Bunji-Chilas Section

Astor	-one Section
Bunji	- two Platoons alongwith one Pack Battery
Chilas	- one Company

(b) Gilgit- Gupis Section

Gupis	- one Company
Gilgit	- The rest of the battalion.

One of the two battalions located at Srinagar was made responsible for manning Leh and Skardu posts with about a platoon at each of the two places.

The training school did a commendable job during this period and from 1923 to 1928 it had trained some 50 probationary Officers and imparted precourse training to about 100 candidates for the army

courses in India. The State Officers, Indian Officers and the Non Commissioned Officers (NCOS) who ultimately attended the courses after the pre-course training at the Training School are reported to have done very well on their respective courses; some of them earning the coveted 'instructor' remark. The Kashmir army candidates on such courses are, infact, reported to have performed many times better than candidates from other state forces.

The state of training and efficiency of the army after its reorganisation can best be judged from the remarks of the Military Advisor (India) in 1928, reproduced below:-

"It has interested me intensely seeing all the Kashmir State Forces and noticing the keeness and energy displayed by all ranks. I also enjoyed visiting the excellent barracks which were being constructed. I saw the batteries in Camp Khundru and the troops at work and attended a staff exercise which was instructive and well conducted. In my opinion the troops are being well cared and well trained."

The J&K State Force continued to take interest in the rifle shooting competitions at the all India level. In the 1924-25 Meet at Meerut Havildar Malidar Major Sahib Singh of the Raghunath Battalion took part in the King's Medal competition and won the gold medal. He then went on to win the bronze medal in the Army Rifle Championship.

Some courses, like company commander's courses and Senior Officers Courses, exclusively for State Force Officers were run by States in turn. This practice was probably started after the reorganisation of 1923 and the Kashmir State conducted its share of such courses as and when called upon to do so by the Military Advisor-in-Chief.

CEREMONIALS

Among the various activities of the troops during this period were the cremonials in which they were required to take part on

several occasions. One such occasion was the visit of the Prince of Wales in 1922. As the Prince stepped down from the train at the Satwari railway station on 2 March 1922, a 31 gun salute was fired by the 2nd Battery and a Guard of Honour was presented to him at the railway station by the 3rd Kashmir Rifles. The whole route from the Station to the Satwari House*, where the Prince was to stay, was lined up by troops; 100 from the Ist Battery and 350 each from Ist and 3rd Battalions. One squardon of cavalry in their red full dress uniform acted as the Prince's escort. On reaching the Satwari House another Guard of Honour was presented by 100 men of the Raghupratap and a 31 guns salute was boomed by the 3rd Battery. The main function of the troops during the visit was the ceremonial parade on 3rd March during which they were reviewed by His Royal Highness. The parade was commanded by the C-in-C Raja Hari Singh himself, the line up of the troops being (a) Pensioners (b) the 2nd Kashmir Mountain Battery, (c) The Body Guard Cavalry (d) Ist Kashmir Infantry; and (e) 3rd Kashmir Rifles. After the review the Prince presented medals to serving and retired personnel, which they had earned during the Great War.[9]

The unveiling ceremony of the 15th Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade War Memorial was held on 6 March 1924 at Delhi. The Kashmir State Officers and men were also invited to attend the function and consequently Captain Hazara Singh with one NCO and four Sowars of the Body Guard Cavalary attended the Ceremony.[10]

Another royal visit requiring the attention of the State Force was that of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Romania in 1923/1924 ~~September 1924~~. A company of the Suraj Gorkha commanded by Subedar Aba Singh presented a Guard of Honour on the arrival of the Prince in Kashmir while a company of Rudar Shibnabh under command of

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9. Jammu Archives Mil Block A-38of 1923 file 53 M/80

10. Ibid Block A-72/1924 file 161-M/80 of 1924

* In the vicinity of the present air field at Satwari

Subedar Ala Dad Khan performed this duty on his departure. As a matter of courtesy the Prince conferred the Romanian award of "Chavalier de La Stoile de Romania" on the two Indian Officers who commanded the Guards of Honour. Colonel A Ward, Officer incharge Shikar at Dachigam in Kashmir was awarded "Officer de La Couronne de Romania" while Pandit Bholu Ram in charge Camp arrangements at Uri in Kashmir was awarded "Chavalier de La Couronne de Romania". The medals were sent by him on his return to his country.[11]

The ceremonial most important for the troops, however, was the Raj Tilak ceremony of their C-in-C, Raja Hari Singh, in January 1926. With the glaxy of a large number of Princes who attended the function, a lot must have been done by way of arrangements not only for the ceremony proper but also towards the reception, lodging and sending off of the distinguished guests. Most of these duties were performed by the 3rd and the 5th Battalions that were stationed at Jammu at that time.

IN AID TO CIVIL AUTHORITY

During the period from 1924 to 1931 the troops had to perform much by way of aid to civil authority. Some of the occasions on which they were requisitioned for such tasks are narrated in succeeding paragraphs:

Security of Trade Routes

In 1924-25 detachments from 1st Kashmir Infantry Operating from Gibdas were engaged in keeping the main trade route between the Punjab and the Gilgit Agency free of raiders at a critical part of the road. The Assistant Political Agent at Chilas recorded his appreciation of the good work done by the Battalion in this regard.[12]

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11. Ibid Block K-14 of 1925 file 174-M-82
12. J&K Administrative Report 1924-25

Anti Kuth Smuggling Operations[13]

Military operations of an extraordinary character were carried out in aid to civil authority in the Karnah area for the protection of 'Kuth' (a medicinal herb) against raiders from tribal territory across the State frontier in the Krishan Ganga Valley region. 'Kuth' is a valuable forest produce of this region and formed a substantial part of the State's income. Illegal extraction of the herb by locals and the tribals from across the border, mostly in connivance with the forest guards, had probably carried on all along the past, but now it had assumed proportions such that the illegal activity could no longer be ignored. The loss that was being incurred by the State as a result of 'Kuth' smuggling was estimated to run into lakhs of rupees and the forest guards, even when they desired to take action could do little against the large number of armed raiders. It was thus that there arose the necessity for the employment of troops in the anti 'Kuth' smuggling role.

The matter of 'Kuth' smuggling had first come to the notice of the Government as early as 1918 but being pre-occupied with activity connected with the Great War, the Afghan war and then the great reorganisation of the army, no troops could be employed on this job till 1924. That year a platoon each from the 2nd and the 3rd Kashmir Rifles was despatched to the Karnah 'Illaqa' for preventing the Kohistanis from conducting raids into the State territories for the purposes of 'Kuth' extracting and smuggling. The troops had often to fight pitched battles with large parties of armed raiders before being able to drive them out and confiscate the 'Kuth' extracted by them. However, these efforts and those in subsequently years upto 1929 could, at best, be termed as half hearted considering the magnitude of the task and the small and insufficient number of troops

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13. Based on Jammu Archives Mil Block R. of 1928; 1 of 1929, 13 of 1929, 45 of 1930, 9 of 1931, 4 of 1934 and J&K Adm Report pertaining to the period.

that were employed. The 'Kuth' being spread over a very large area which was precipitous and rugged all over and generally impassable, through reconnaissance and patrolling was difficult and the only way to effectually control the area was by establishing a large number of picquets spread all over the area. The task required the services of a complete battalion where as only one or two platoon were being provided. Even these many troops were being made available for short durations so as not to infere with their training; the 'Kuth' protection period synchronising with the best training period.

On repeated requests from the Forest Department the Military Board had in 1928 accepted the proposal for locating about a platoon strength under an Indian Officer (JCO) in the Karnah 'Illaqa' for the sole purpose of Kuth protection. This Platoon was intially to be detailed from the Jammu garrison but later it was decided that the platoon be provided by the Srinagar garrison. However, even as these details were being worked out the Kohistanis intensified their raids and the forest authorities revised their requirement for troops to one hundred. The situation had become so serious that the Conservator of Forests made the request for troops direct to the Maharaja. This had the desired effect and one platoon of the 5th Light Infantry under a State Officer left Srinagar for the Karnah 'Illaqua' via Handwara immediately, while one paltoon of the 4th Pioneers was held in reserve. This reserve platoon was also rushed up when on arrival in the area of operations the platoon of the Suraj Gorkhas found the situation rather hot and the Officer in charge asked for reinforcements. Both these platoons had Lewis guns with 2000 rounds each but evidently the situation demanded many more troops. On further requests from the Officer in Charge another two platoons of the 5th Battalion alongwith a company headquarters was moved from Srinagar to Karnah bringing the strength in the area to a company plus.

The troops went into action immediately and between July and September that year, had a number of skirmishes with the armed tribesmen in which some of the smugglers/intruders were killed and a large number of them arrested while many maunds of 'Kuth' was recovered. In the between, Colonel Rahmat Ullah Khan had been despatched to the area to make a study of the situation and report to the Government. On his recommendations one more company of the 5th Battalion was inducted into the area of operations while the rest of the Battalion moved from Manasbal to Tragham to be handy for reinforcing the troops in action as and when such a need arose. The fortsmen at Shardaji also assisted in this anti 'Kuth' smuggling drive. Major Milkha Singh of the Suraj Gorkhas was appointed the overall incharge of these operations.

Heavy rains swept the area of operations in September and many army picquets/parties got cut off from the headquarters as bridges got washed away by floods and long stretches of roads and tracks got obliterated due to land slides. The tribals now found their opportunity for going on to the offensive against the isolated picquets. Many of these picquets were attacked but in each case the tribals were driven back with losses. Not only did these picquets hold their own against tribal attacks, but they also, after an initial set back, went about their task with the same vigour and energy even while isolated from their headquarters and the process of capture of smugglers and recovery of large quantities of Kuth was continued.

While in all the encounters the troops got the better of the raiders, even when greatly out numbered by them, on one occassion at Gujjar Domel they suffered rather badly, when two soldiers were killed and one injured seriously, while all the the three rifles on them were carried away by the tribals. It so happened that Jamadar Gaje Singh, picquet Commander at Gujjar Domel, took out a patrol of 11 men towards Pari. While the patrol was on its way, the leading

four men, spotted a party of smugglers and in their eagerness to apprehend the culprits they decided to give them a chase without reference to the patrol commander, who was moving some distance behind. Soon the four were separated from the patrol and got engaged in a fight with the smugglers a mile or so away. On hearing the sound of firing Jamadar Gaje Singh rushed the rest of patrol forward only to find three of the four men, who had separated from the patrol, lying seriously wounded. Two of these, Sepoys Lakhia and Munia, died before they could be evacuated while the third sepoy Ram Dyal was evacuated and saved. The fourth had escaped unhurt. It was learnt from the survivors that the four men had caught up with the smugglers and were in the process of bringing them back as captives when they were attacked by another party of some 25 tribals who seriously wounded three of them while the fourth escaped. The rifles of the wounded had been snatched by the tribals and carried away to British India. These rifles were ultimately recovered through the efforts of the Assistant Political Agent Chilas, one in March 1930 and the other two in August 1931.

The troops were gradually withdrawn with the onset of winter in December 1929. During this period from July to December the two Companies under Major Milkha Singh had achieved good results. 57 Maunds (about 2130 kg) of Kuth had been recovered from smugglers, 8 of whom had got killed while 92 of them had been arrested.

Kuth was found not only in the Keran Forest Division of the Krishan Ganga Valley but also in the Astore Illaqua of Gilgit, where illegal extraction used to be carried on by the Yaqistani tribals from across the border. Simultaneous to the operations that were conducted in the Krishen Ganga Valley, operations on a smaller scale were carried out in Astore. Various parties from the Gilgit garrison were deputed to block the routes used by the smugglers to gain entry into the Kuth producing areas in the region. By the end of 1929 some

60 smugglers had been arrested and over 30 mounds (about 1115 kg) of 'Kuth' recovered from them. Commandant Gilgit Area also made arrangement for the Military custody of the smugglers till their cases were settled.

Anti 'Kuth' smuggling operations continued during 1930. The 'Kuth' Protection Committee that had been formed by them, had decided to employ three companies in the Keren Forest Division during summer and then use the same compaines in the Muzaffarabad Division during winter. The Committee also decided to send one company to the Kishtwar Division for checking the smuggling of 'Kuth' to Chamba. Ultimately, however, only one company was employed in the Keran and Muzaffarabad Divisions and another in the Kishtwar Division. Both these companies were again from the 5th Light Infantry.

The same year alarm was sounded in Gilgit when a large influx of trans-border men into Chilas was noted by the Political Agent. It was suspected that these frontier men were out to escertain the chances of smuggling 'Kuth' from the State territory that years. Consequently the Political Agent made arrangements to restrict this immigration and prevent undesireables from obtaining free passage through Chilas into Astore or the Krishen Ganga Valley. The Wazir of Gilgit on the other hand had apprehended a ~~Yaqistani raid~~ a raid by Yagistanis into Astore in 1930 to take revenge on the people ~~of Astore~~ for the ~~xxxx~~ great help they had rendered to the government ~~in~~ in arresting ~~Yaqistani~~ smugglers the previous year. Consequently Colonel Commandant Gilgit area sent two platoons of 2nd Body Guard under a State Officer to Rattu. The Officer set up his headquarters at Rattu while the platoons were deployed one each at Shivdas Miramlik and Rupal nalla (both about 10 miles from Rattu) to cover the likely approaches of the smugglers. These platoons were subsequently relieved from the Munji Company of the same Battalion. This deployment of troops seems to have had a deterrent effect as there is no record of the smugglers having made any move in the area.

Even as the military was being employed for checking 'Kuth' smuggling the State Government kept on pressing the British Indian Government for the re-imposition of the Punjab and North West Frontier Provinces Kuth Notification under the Indian Forests Act, which had been inforced a few years earlier for restricting the import of Kuth and its passage through Punjab and the North West Frontier Privince of India. At a conference held at Lahore in 1929 the Kashmir Chief Conservator of Forests had brought to the notice of the Indian Government the fact of the increase in the smuggling of 'Kuth' from Kashmir ever since the lifting of the Notification. It had been estimated by him that about 2000 maunds (about 75 metric tonne) of Kuth worth about 5 Lakhs of rupees had been smuggled out of the state in 1929 alone. The British, however, do not appear to have been interested in the reimposition of the Notification regarding restrictions on the Kuth import etc for fear of losing the goodwill of Yaqastanis whom they were at that time trying to appease and subdue. As a matter of fact the British were even suspected of encouraging smuggling of 'Kuth' to keep the tribals happy. A written report to this effect was made by Subedar Attar Singh of the Suraj Gorkha on the basis of information gathered by him through his contacts which he had developed during his tenure of duty in the Kamah area in 1929. After much persuation the British relented and finally agreed to reimpose the restrictions on Kuth movement on 2nd August 1930. The troops engaged on 'Kuth' protection duties, however, stayed on at their respective places ~~on the border closed with the setting in of winter.~~ and were withdrawn only in October that year when the passes on the border closed with the setting in of winter.

On the re-introduction of the Notification on 'Kuth', it was expected that there would now be no need to employ troops on 'Kuth' protection duties within the State. This was, however, not to be and demands for troops continued to be made by the Forest Department each year even if on a smaller scale. In 1931 the Divisional Forest Officer

Keran Division requisitioned troops not so much against Kuth smuggling as for the protection of the local people who faced the danger of revenge on them by the Kohistanis for the treatment they had received at the hands of the army during the last two years. There was also a strong rumour that the tribals from across the border would raid the State Territory with a view to recover from the locals by force any advance that they may have paid to them for smuggling out 'Kuth' as was the practice. This threat was taken serious note of and the Chief Conservator of Forests requisitioned 50 troops for protection against the possibility of such armed raids. Consequently two platoons of 2nd Kashmir Rifles under captain Abdul Majid were despatched to the area in the middle of June 1931. Although these troops, about 76 in all, were not enough to guard even the important five of the sixteen odd routes of entry, which could be used by the raidsrs, they appear to have had a deterrant effect, and no raids, as such, were actually made by the tribals. Heavy rains and floods occured again at this year and the various piquets were cut off from their base for a good length of time. As no operations were necessitated the troops were withdrawn by the end of October. The troops were employed on 'Kuth' duties practically every year for some years to come.

During the operations in Karnah area the troops were required to undergo great hardships, to compensate which the Government sanctioned special concessions for troops so engaged. The man were given fuel allowances at Rs. 2/- per month and extra ration allowance at Rs. 9/- per month. Clothing to the troops were issued at the Gilgit scale. Over and above this scale they were issued with a Loi (a sort of blanket) one pair of free spectacles and one Balaclava Cap. The extra expenditure on troops employed on these duties was debited to the Forest Department. This included the expenditure on the move of troops. Interestingly the troops had to use various modes of transport for reaching Shardaji. From Srinagar to Trahgam motor transport

provided by the civil contractor was used and ponies were used there after upto a place called Dadnial. From Dadnial to Sharda Ji even ponies could not be used and coolies had to be hired for this part of the journey.

The Floods[14]

Another major task performed by the troops in aid to civil authroity was the assistance they rendered in connection with the serious floods in the Kashmir Valley during 1929. The moment it was clear that the disaster was inevitable measures to cope with the danger were initiated without delay. The troops were assigned the main task of the protection of the river bund in Srinagar where the greatest damage to life and property was apprehended. The following units were employed on the task:-

(a) 3 Pack Battery

(b) 4th Kashmir Pioneers (Fateh Shivji)

(c) 5th Kashmir Light Infantry (Suraj Gorkha)

(d) Kashmir Military Transport

(e) Station Hospital ~~BB Cantt~~ Badami Bagh Cantonment (BB Cantt)

(f) Detatchment Kashmir Body Guard Cavalry

The troops had to work under very difficult contitions in darkness and in rain and had to contend with the rising floods with such scanty materials as could be made available to them at short notice. Their morale was, however, kept high by Maharaja Hari Singh himself appearing before them at odd places and odd hours of the night for a word or two of cheer. It may be understood that the loyalty of the troops towards the Maharaja was eminence and nothing in those days moved the troops more than the sight of their Maharaja. On the orders of the Maharaja the troops, were issued with free refreshments as they worked day and night without rest. At the end of the operation which had saved Srinagar from damage and destruction, the troops were heartily congratulated by the Maharaja in a message dated 18 September 1929.

14. Based on Jammu Archives Mil Block K-10 of 1929 file 173-K/86

In the message the Maharaja commended the discipline, devotion to duty vigilence and industry of the troops which they had manifested. These and the extra-ordinary cheerfulness throughout were for him a source of great pride." He was happy that the troops had maintained in peace those high traditions for which they were renowned in war. In recognition of their services the Maharaja authorised payment, as reward, of Rs.3/- to each NCO and Rs.2/- to each sepoy who was on duty in connection with the floods.

It is of interest to note that this particular action of the troops under the direct supervision of the Maharaja has been acclaimed even by the Maharaja's greatest critics, as having gone a long way in winning the hearts of the Muslims of Kashmir.[15]

Escort Duties

In 1930-31 about 3000 rifles and three million rounds of ammunition were depatched by the British from Lohala to Leh for the Chinese at Sinkiang. These were carried in 8 convoys between 10 June and 22 August 1931. The convoys were escorted from Kohala to Srinagar and thereafter to Leh by troops provided by the Ist, 4th and the 5th Battalions. From Leh to Sinkiang, the arms and ammunition were carried under arrangements of the Chinese. The troops were compensated by the Government of India to the extent of the cost of war and tear of uniforms and the difference between the cost of normal rations and rations at Gilgit scale.[16]

Muslim Agitation- 1931[17]

The greatest demand on the troops for assisting the civil authority was made in 1931 when wide-spread distrubances by Muslim subjects broke out in various parts of the State. It must be mentioned at the outset that although demands on them were pretty frequent and despite the communal nature of the disturbances, the State Army, both its Hindu and Muslim constituents displayed great loyalty,

15. Mohammad Yusuf Saraf Kashmiris Fight for Freedom pp 344
16. Jammu Archives Mil Block E-77 of 1931 file 446-M-97
17. Based on disscrtation submitted by the author to the university of Jammu for his M Phil degree in history.

considerable restrain and coolness in even the most trying circumstance under which they were required to act and their work was most admirable. Much credit for this must go to the Chief of the Military Staff Brig R O Sutherland DSO, who inspite of British interests lying clearly with the agitators displayed the greatest loyalty towards the Maharaja, the State and the troops that he commanded; at times to the annoyance of the Resident in Kashmir and the British Indian Government.

The origin of the disturbances is a matter of great political controversy and it is beyond the scope of this book to enter into a debate to resolve the wrangle. Some amount of back-ground is, however, necessary to view the action of troops during the agitation in its correct perspective. It has to be understood that the Muslim agitation of 1931 was not just an ordinary agitation for the redress of the Muslim greviances, where the army was used to crush the genuine aspirations of the people, as made out by some.

Being the Hindu Ruler of a predominently Muslim State, the hard times ahead of Maharaja Hari Singh were predicted by many in India on his ascending the 'Gaddi' in 1925. The Maharaja's position was generally accepted to be that of a step mother who for all the good that she may do for her children is never accepted by them as their mother. This in itself explains to some extent why the Muslims had to start an agitation within the first few years of the new Maharaja's rule, which are generally accepted, even by his ardent opponents, to have been studded with grant of numerous boons to his Muslim subjects. It, however, does not explain the forceful and violent nature of the agitation which shook the Dogra Raj at its roots. That could probably be explained only by a study of some external factors that were at play at the time. The Muslim League in India which had suffered an eclipse in the wake of the Civil Disobedience Movement launched by the Indian National Congress in 1930 was looking for an opportunity to stage a come back. Kashmir was chosen as the venue for achieving

this because of the favourable and easy to exploit situation existing there. Besides, Kashmir formed an integral part of their scheme for creating a federation of the five Muslim majority states of the north and north western part of India, which later developed into the idea of Pakistan. Consequently an All India Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Confe: Conference was formed in December 1930 at Lahore for stepping up activities against the Dogra Maharaja with a view to dislodge him, or atleast make him ineffective. Indeed this organisation could easily take full credit for all that happened in Kashmir thereafter. Its task was made easier by the British who decided to throw no impediments in the way of this anti-State activity that was conducted from within British India even though they were under an obligation to take action under the Princess Protection Act of 1922. Beside the general policy of supporting the cause of the Muslim League any where and every where, which the British were following at that time, they had their own groups against Maharaja Hari Singh. Apart from having the audacity of demanding the abolition of the Gilgit Agency and all territory under it reverting to State control, the Maharaja had displayed his anti-British sentiments in more than one way ever since he had ascended the 'Gaddi'. What was worse the Maharaja was making no effort to conceal the fact of his strong leanings towards the Indian National Congress which was at that time pursuing a policy of confrontation with the British Raj. The Congress was infact anathema to the British at that time and any one associated with it even in some remote manner, was bound to invite their wrath. The Maharaja must have known this but goaded by nationalistic favour, as he was, he chose to make matters worse for himself by openly supporting at the Round Table Conference in London in 1930, the idea of the Greater Federation of India as anvisaged in the Moti Lal Nehru Report but opposed by the Simon Commission. It was, perhaps, thus that the British threw in their lot with the agitators. Their outward claim

that they were moved by a desire to get the grievances of the Muslim subjects redressed is believed by the fact that no where else in India did they exhibit such noble sentiments. Indeed even as they were ostensively siding with the people's cause in Kashmir, they were promoting the princely cause in Patiala. Their hypocracy is laid bare by the letter written by Secretary Home to the Punjab Government directing the latter to take stern action against the Praja Mandal which had launched an agitation against the Maharaja of Patiala for the redress of certain grievances of the subjects of that state. So as to leave no doubt in any ones mind regarding the British concern for the states people, the secretary Home wrote, rather unabashedly, that action against the Praja Mandal, which had connections with the Indian National Congress and were glorifying Bhagat Singh and Dutt as national martyrs could not be withheld" merely on the grounds that the machinery for ventilating the reasonable grievances of state-subjects would thereby be shut down" as was being represented by the Punjab Government This is not to say that the people of the State did not have grievances That they would have always and under any government. In fact some of the grievances were genuine and certainly needed redress. It is only that they were not of such great importance as to warrant a violent agitation of the magnitude that was then launched. Nor was the Maharaja averse to listening to the genuine grievances, had they been properly put up to him. Little wonder that this issue got completely side lined as the agitation progressed; ultimately ending up as an agitation for the sake of agitation. Unfortunately the common man whose support was enlisted by the leaders by playing upon his religious sentiments remained unaware of the extraneous factors that were at play and he fought under a firm belief that Islam was in danger under the Dogra Raj, The Indian National Congress had evidently seen through the game being played by the British and the Muslim League and it supported the Maharaja morally by condemning thex agitation and asking its Muslim

members to completely dissociate themselves from the agitation. Its mouth-piece the Amrit Bazar Patrika, in fact, came out openly in support of the Maharaja.

The British support to the agitation made the task of the State army difficult. Besides its action being restricted because of British interference, its resources got stretched to breaking point as the agitation continued to grow with unhindered support both moral and material that it received from the Muslims of Punjab through kind courtesy crutsey of the British. The State was finally compelled to seek British military help for putting down the agitation. Nothing could have pleased the British more, for, through this help they were able to dictate their terms to the recalcitrant Maharaja.

The showdown between the State Government and the agitators had become inevitable when in April 1931 there occurred in Jammu some unfortunate incidents which provided the Muslim leadership in Kashmir an apportunity for working up the religious sentiments of the masses by raising the bogy of Islam being in danger. The fuze was finally lit by what came to be known as, the Abdul Qadir Episode. Abdul Qadir who had come to Kashmir in guise of a cook to a British Officer, made a very inflamatory speech in Srinagar with the aim of arousing the communal passions of his Muslim audience and spurring them on to revolt against their Hindu Ruler. The Government that had been avoiding a confrontation with the agitators to the point of total inactivity, as advocated by Mr Wakefield, the minister incharge police (law and order), was now left with no alternative but to take notice and arrest Abdul Qadir on charge of sedition. For Security reasons the trial of Abdul Qadir was arranged within the premises of Srinagar jail. The agitators on the other hand, having been emboldened bythe Governments earlier policy of appeasement, decided not to allow the Government to try Abdul Qadir and on 13 July thousands of them attacked the Jail while the Session Judge was holding court within. As the situation went out of

control the DIG Sheikh Aziz Din who had arrived on the scene ordered the police picquet on duty at the Jail to fire on the crowd to disperse it. Six persons were killed on the spot while four died of wounds subsequently. The crowd dispersed but went round the town looting shops belonging to the Hindus. There were also cases of assaults on Hindus and of molesting of their women. Simultaneously riots started in the suburban areas and in villages and the situation got out of control of the police. It was at this stage that the army was called out. The day to day actions of the various army units/sub units in connection with the restoration of law and order in Srinagar and adjacent areas, as per record maintained by Srinagar Brigade[18] is given in succeeding paragraphs:

13 July Situation got out of control of police, and aid of army requisitioned by civil authority. Immediately Lieut Nar Singh with his troops of cavalry moved to the Dal Lake fully armed with lances and swords. Also Brigadier Brig Sutherland with 50 men of the 5th Kashmir Light Infantry proceeded to the central jail. Meantime seven civil lorries requisitioned by the police were sent to Badami Bagh for conveyance of troops to disturbed afeas. Using these vehicles 250 men accompanied by Brig Onkar Singh, Commander Srinagar Brigade, rushed to Maharaj Ganj where general looting of shops belonging to Hindus was reported to be taking place. Looting had, however, ceased when troops arrived there. All the same Brigade Headquarters was set up at Maharaj Gang and troops ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ deployed all over the city. Only one clash took place between the troops and the mob when a patrol from the 5th Battalion led by L/NK Shyam Singh was attacked by the mob and the patrol was compelled to open fire in self defence. The mob suffered one killed and one wounded before being forced to disperse.

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18. Jammu Archiwes Mil Block E-97 of 1931 file no Nil, Block E 96 of 1931 file 24/1988 and Block E-10/1932 file no 4.

14 July Dead bodies of those killed in firing which had been collected and kept in the Jama Masjid were to be buried on this day. Trouble was feared and as a precautionary measure Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was whisked away from the Masjid in a military lorry under orders of Brig (Brigadier) Sutherland and lodged in the cantonment alongwith other arrested leaders of the agitation. Next, Brig (Brigadier) Sutherland prevailed upon the Mir Waiz to keep the burial ceremony peaceful and quiet. The troops present on duty paid full respects to the dead as they were brought out of the Masjid. Mir Waiz kept his word and the burial passed off peacefully. There was, however, trouble in Vicharnag where Jemadar Rattan Singh's party was attacked by a mob compelling him to open fire. One platoon of the Ist Battalion under Lieut Mansa Ram was rushed to Vicharnag. This platoon was also attacked and had to charge on the mob to disperse it.

15 July There was a major clash between the mob and military picquests at Nawa Bazar. On the mob being asked to disperse, it attacked the picquet commanded by Naik Onkar Singh of the Suraj Gorkha. The picquet opened fire as some among the mob tried to snatch the rifle of a jawan. One man was killed and three injured (all below the waist) as a result of this firing. In a second incident in the area, Naik Udham Singh's picquet was stoned from roof tops. Naik Udham Singh made some arrests and handed them over to the police.

16 July Situation appeared to be fast returning to normal. At Raina Wari a shopkeeper reported that his shop had been looted by troops. A court of inquiry was ordered immediately for investigating the matter. The accusation turned out to befalse and motivated

17 July Patrolling suspended, the day being Friday when people would be going for prayers. 40 Men of the Body Guard under Lieut Mardan Ali Shah were, however, posted at Jama Masjid and two

troops

troops of the cavalry sent to Hazart Bal as a precautionary measure. On receiving reports that some telegraph posts had been ~~brought~~ pulled down by the agitators, a mobile patrol of 15 men of training school under Jamadar Pratap Singh of Ist Kashmir Infantry was detailed for security of telegraph and telephone lines between Anantnag and Verinag.

19 July. Because of the firm handling of the situation by the army, complete quiet and normalcy returned to the city on the 19th The two Lewis gun sections posted in Ram Niwas Palace were now removed. In an attempt to malign the army and work up the people ~~against~~ against it, the agitators levelled many accustaions on the army which on investigation proved to be totally false. One such accusation was that a small Gujjar boy had been shot at by a sepoy for no rhym or reason. On investigation it was found that the boy had infact been injured when he playfully hit, with a stone, a detonator which he ~~had injured when he~~ had found while grazing cattle on the grenade firing range. The rumour that the boy had been shot at by a sepoy, which was spread by the leaders of the agitation did much harm to the reputation of the army before it was scotched.

20 July. Even as normalcy was being restored in the city, reports of violent activities of the agitators in the country side continued to be received. On reports of looting in Tral village, Subedar Sahib Singh with 12 men of the 5th Battalion was rushed to the area. Protection was also provided to octroi posts at Mahawara, Sowara, Achar and Vicharnag. A party of 15 men under an Indian Officer, ~~(JCO)~~ self contained for 3 days, was detailed to patrol area between Islamabad and Pahalgam. Two other parties of 12 rifles each were detailed to patrol :-

(a) Pampur to Bijbehara; and

(b) Pattan area upto Baramulla.

22 July. The charge of the city was taken over by Colonel Rahmat Ullah Khan while Brig Onkar Singh remained in charge of out

posts in the country side. Hence forth each patrol was accompanied by one Hindu and on Muslim civil Officer.

25 July. Sangam bridge set on fire by miscreants. One Indian Officer and 16 men of Suraj Gorkha were rushed to the scene. The party could not save the bridge but apprehended 5 suspects who were lurking/hiding near the bridge. As a precautionary measure protection was provided to Ramban bridge and Lusjan Match Factory. Picquets were also detailed as under :-

	IO	NCO	Sepoys SEPOYS	TOTAL
Pulwama	-	1	7	8
Kulgam	-	1	7	8
Badgam	-	1	7	8
Bijbehara	1	3	16	20
Baramulla	-	1	7	8
Handwara	-	1	7	8

27 July. Guards were provided by the army to all ministers. A cavalry patrol, 104 strong, was detailed to patrol the road from Srinagar to Khru because of Kashmiri Pandit's fair at Khru on 23 July

8 August. Lieut Colonel Abdul Rahim Khan Officer Commanding 2nd Kashmir Rifles took over charge of the city from Colonel Rahamat Ullah Khan.

Ist to 14th August. The Maharaja, in a bid to come to terms with Sheikh Abdullah and thereby forestall British intervention that was being threatened, had dismissed Wakefield, who was suspected to be behind all mischief, and brought in Raja Hari Krishen Kaul as the Prime Minister of the State on 25 July. On 1 August Sheikh Abdullah was released from Jail on his giving an undertaking that he would not make any inflamatory and seditious speech before he had submitted the grievances to the Maharaja and received a reply thereon. The date for the submission of grievances was fixed for 6 August but was extended

to 10th at the request of Sheikh Abdullah who had not been able to formulate his demands by the due date. Meanwhile the Muslims of British India got alarmed at the prospects of a settlement between the Maharaja and local Muslim leadership without the purpose of the Indian Muslims having been served. They organised "Kashmir day" on 14th August and forbade the Sheikh from submitting his grievances to the Maharaja before that date. Accordingly no grievances were placed before the Maharaja on the 10th as promised by Sheikh Abdullah. The Army, therefore, prepared itself to meet the threat posed by the observance of "Kashmir Day". 79 additional men of 5 KLI and 64 of the Cavalry were detailed for different parts of the city on 13 August. Anantnag was reinforced by 23 men of the 5th Battalion and additional men from the training school were sent to Pampur, Sopore, Verinag, Gulmarg and Tral. Guards were also posted at the flood spill channel bridge near Ram Bagh, and Baramullah-Chattabal cross roads. The "Kashmir Day" however, passed off peacefully.

15 August to 21 September. On 15 August the leaders of the agitation sought audience with the Maharaja for putting up their grievance but on audience being granted no grievances as such were put up. Instead they made a general statement on the prevailing situation. The only demand made was one for the dismissal of the new Prime Minister. The Maharaja thenk invited Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad to Kashmir to use their good offices in persuading Sheikh Abdullah to put up the Muslim grievances to him. When both failed he requested Sir Mehar Shah from Punjab to mediate. Sir Mehar Shah succeeded and as the firm demands of the Muslims had yet to be formulated, interim demands were put up to the Maharaja on 24 August. Side by side a settlement between the local leaders and the State Government was worked out. Termed as 'the Kashmir Settlement', it was signed by the concerned parties on 26 August; Sir Mehar Shah signing as a witness. Unfortunately, however, the local leadership had lost all

control over the agitation and the 'Kashmir Settlement' fell through no sooner than it had been made. The leaders had worked up the anti-Government feelings of the people to such a high pitch that the settlement with the government came as startling anticlimax to the entire drama and looked like a sell out. To show its resentment a mob attacked Sheikh Abdullah's house and he had to run out of the back door to escape its fury. The Punjabi Muslims also did not take kindly to Sheikh's efforts to come to terms with the Government, without their aim having been fulfilled. To give a fresh impetus to the dying agitation and to provide moral courage to the local leadership to resist government efforts at reaching a settlement, the Ahrars of Punjab decided to storm the State with, what may be called, a civil invasion. Thousands of volunteers entered the State at various points on the Jammu borders and offered themselves for arrest. Although the volunteers were mostly non violent, the large scale ingress towards the end of August created a bigh law and order problem for the State that had stretched its resources for dealing with the situation to the limit. The Maharaja's appeal to the British for checking this anti-state activity, being organised in British India under the terms of the Princes Protection Act 1922 quite naturally went unheeded under the plea that such an action would create a law and order situation for themselves. Consequently the State decided to deal with the situation on its own and the army was again alerted. Meanwhile Sheikh Abdullah had decided to ride the tide rather than go against it. He backed out of his committment under the "Kashmir Settlement" and renewed his inflamatory and seditious speeches to start the second round of the agitation. He was arrested again and lodged in the Cantonment under the custody of the Suraj Gorkha. The Battalion was authorised to spend twelve annas per day on his food (which was enough in those days to give him Officers rations) and

Captain Pir Mohammad Khan was detailed to look after the prisoner. In anticipation of the trouble that Sheikh Abdullah's arrest was likely to create Brigadier Sutherland, who was on casual leave in Gulmarg was recalled and a number of patrols were organised within the city as under :-

(a) One troop cavalry along the Srinagar- Chhattabal road.

(b) One troop cavalry towards Maharaj Ganj-Shahamdan side.

(c) 55 men of 5 KLI under Jemadar Gokal Chand to Maharaj Ganj.

(d) 20 men under Subeder Teja Singh to Amira Kadal.

(e) 10 men under Jemadar Qabla Singh to Hari Singh High Street

(f) 6 men under one NCO to Chhattabal

(g) 8 men under one NCO to Pandre Quarry

(h) The Palace Guards were employed to relieve Cavalry Patrols.

22 September: A large crowd collected at Jama Masjid and insisted on going out in a procession to protest against the arrest of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. The Government fearing violences refused permission and sent Khan Bahadur Abdul Majid to persuade the crowd to disperse peacefully. ~~When Bahadur Abdul Majid to persuade the crowd to disperse peacefully.~~ When this failed a Cavalry troop was employed to disperse the crowd. The troops came under heavy shower of stones from the mob and many Sowars were injured. The mob then turned towards the army picquet and attacked it, compelling the troops to open fire in which three from the mob were killed. Amirakadal, Maharaj Ganj, Pattan and Anantnag remained quiet. Night Curfew was clamped on the city starting at 2100 hours daily, the time being announced by firing a gun from Hari Parbat fort.

23 September: On assurance being given by the Muslim leaders that the procession would be peaceful, it was allowed to be taken out in Srinagar. As a precautionary measure 40 men of the 1st Battalion, 35 of the ~~second~~ 2nd Battalion, 125 from the Training School

and the whole of the Palace Guard were deployed around Jama Masjid and along the route of the procession. Two machine guns were also positioned- one at Jama Masjid and the other at Maharaj Ganj. No untoward incident took place in the city but a clash between the army and a mob took place at Anantnag. The mob attacked the military picquet there and tried to snatch away the rifles. The picquet opened fire killing 19 and wounding 30. It appears that the troops exercised restraint to such an extent as to allow the mob to get too close. This resulted in a scuffle and the consequent firing. In a subsequent independent inquiry conducted by a British Officer, the action of the picquet was considered as justified. The incident was, however, most unfortunate as it was used by the leaders of the agitation for whipping up the anti government feelings among the Muslim masses.

24 September: Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah on whom the mantle of leadership had fallen after the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah declared 'Jehad' (Holy War) against the 'Hindu Raj'. A 'Narchoo Paltan' armed with spears, axes, lances and a few match-locks was organised which made a great show of force at Khanyar. To avoid unnecessary loss of lives that could have resulted from an armed clash between the 'Paltan' and the army the Maharaja rushed Nawab Khusru Jang to meet the leaders and explain to them the futility of an armed rebellion. As the leaders failed to see reason it became obvious that some firm measures by the Government were now necessary. So the Government promulgated an ordinance No 19 L of 1988 (S) which was drafted on the lines of the Burma Ordinance of 1918. Provisions made under the ordinance and their implications were explained to all officers by Colonel Rahamat Ullah Khan at the Exhibition Grounds. Under the ordinance, non compliance of orders was made punishable with imprisonment extending to three years or with flogging not exceeding 30 stripes or fine extending to Rs. 1000/- and arrests could be made without warrant. Rules under the Notification were published for public information in

* Samat Bikrimi corresponding to 1931 A.D.

the form of 'ailans'. Flag march with the Maharajas Standards was made throught the city by all the available troops. Initially the ordinance was enforced in Srinagar only but subsequently it was extended, through separate notifications, to the city of Jammu and towns of Anantnag Sarayal, Mattan, Bijbehara, Pulwama, Baramulla and Sopore. The Srinagar city was divided into sectors A to G and troops and commanders were detailed as under:-

Sector	Area	No of tps	Commanders	Remarks
'A'	Drugjan, Munshi Bagh Chinar Bagh	50	Capt Maluk Singh Lt Nasar Ullah Khan	From Training School
'B'	Mahisuma, Khanyar Maharaj Bazar, Shahidganj.	50	Capt Hira Nand Lt. Bhagwan Singh	-do-
'C'	Ban Mohalla, Karfali Mohalla, Hawan, Urdu Bazar	50	Capt Tribat Singh Lt Mohim Singh	Ist KI
'D'	Nauhatta, Sangin Darwaza Rainawari, Hazarat Bal	100	Lieut Colonel Dev Singh Captain Inder Singh Lieutenant Suchet Singh	-do-
'E'	Bagyas, Sagidafar Maharaj Ganj	50	Captain Surajan Singh Lieutenant Kehar Singh	
'F'	Vicharnag	20	Lieutenant Hardyal Dutt	
'G'	Exhibition Ground	100	Captain N S Rawat Captain Zahur Hussain Captain Lekhpat Rai Lieuteant Ishri Singh	Reserve

The Palace Guard and the Cavalry were asked to patrol the right and the left bank of the River, with a patrol from each, every two hours. The infantry also patrolled in the sectors allotted to it. Instructions from the Maharaja were issued to troops employed on such duties as under :-

(a) All measures necessary to restore order should be taken but everything which is likely to cause bitterness or permanent hostility should be avoided.

(b) No punishment was to be awarded without trial by special magistrates deputed for the purpose at the Exhibition Ground, Maharaj Ganj and Central Jail.

(c) Offenders to be brought to trial without the least delay.

(d) No undue harasment of the public was to be done.

25 September: A party 100 strong under Captain NS Rawat was ordered to search Mosque Aqelmarin and also to arrest Saud-ud-Din Shawl, Ashai and Ghulam Nabi from their houses. The mosque was searched by Muslim troops under Lieutenant Fateh Ali Khan but nothing was found. All the required arrests were duly made.

26 September: Under orders of a magisterate the military picquet under Subedar Narad Singh opened fire on a mob that attacked the police station at Shopian and killed one head constable Madho Ram. One person was killed and 8 wounded before the mob dispersed. 19 L of 1988(S) was thereafter extended to Shopian and 91 arrests were made under orders of the military commander Captain Chattar Singh.

27 September to 4 October: Numerous compluints of troops misbehaviour with the public were made by European visitors. On being investigated most complaints proved to be baseless and motivated but there were some that were genuine. Courts of inquiry were held for each complaint and those found guilty found were punished. Captain N S Rawat was sepecially detailed to remind the sector Commanders of the Maharaja's instructions forbidding any ill treatment of the inhabitants. These instructions were subsequently repeated from time to time . On Ist October the Statesman reported indiscriminate flogging as having taken place in full view of the public. The political affiliations of the Statesman being as they were, the report by its correspondent was quite obviously motivated. Brigadier Sutherland protested vehmently to the correspondent as all flogging was duly ordered by magistrates after summary trial and was conducted within the precincts of government buildings to which the public had no access. Many Muslims were prepared to co-operate with the government but kept themselves away for fear of the poster

campaign that was started by the agitators against such people, branding them as 'Kafirs' (infidels) and 'Gaddars' (Traitors).

5 October: Maharaja made a birthday announcement withdrawing 19 L and the troops moved back to the barracks. The Special Notification had remained in force for about 11 days only but during this short period it had succeeded in restoring calm and tranquility in the city.

With peace having returned to the valley a regular tussel started between the Maharaja and the British (who had by now completely indentified themselves with the cause of the agitators) on who was to enquire into the events after 22 September and as to who was to go into the grievances of the people. The British wanted both these to be done by their officers and finally they won. The Maharaja had in fact agreed to the British demands right at the outset of the peace move. Now he was only asking for the privalege, as a Ruler, of receiving the grievances of the people, before annouincing the appointment of the Glancy Commission to go into these grievances, so that his authority would not be undermined. This privilege the British were not prepared to grant him as the erasing of the Maharaja's authority was, indeed, what they had been aiming at. On the Majaraja granting general amnesty to all political offenders on 5 October the British had arrested Muzhar Ali the leader of the Ahrars and the sending in of 'Jathas' into the State had been suspended wef 9 October. With the Maharaja now insisting on his privilege, the Ahrars were let loose on the State again wef 29 October. Besides the Suchet garh border, the Ahrars now opened another front opposite Kohala for entry into the Kashmir Valley. By 2 November some 2000 volunteers had been arrested by the State Government in the vicinity of Suchetgarh alone. The Jammu Brigade had a tough time in coping up with the situation created by the Ahrars. It was not only a question of making arrests and arranging for the board and lodge of the prisoners. The

entry of 'Jathas' had generated much communal tension in the province and it was becoming increasingly difficult for the troops of Jammu Brigade to deal with the situation. On Ist November one Allah Rakha Sagar of the Anjaman-i-sarfroshan started a civil disobedience movement in the Jammu province and his arrest on 2 November caused considerable unrest and the Jammu Brigade was hard put to in controlling the situation. Consequently on 4 November the Maharaja was forced to announce the Glancy Commission and ask the British Indian Government for help. The British were only waiting for such a situation to arise and British troops were despatched to Jammu the same day. They now found no difficulty in banning the 'Jathas' and very soon order was restored. Mercifully the Maharaja had been allowed the satisfaction of receiving the grievances before announcing the appointment of the Glancy Commission. ~~It is of interest to note that reports of both the Middleton Commission.~~ It is of interest to note that reports of both the Middleton Commission which enquired into the actions of Government officials between 22 September and 4 October, as well as the Glancy Commssion which looked into the grievances of the people came came as a anti-climax to the whole drama. While Middleton exhonerated the Government and particularly the army for the action taken by it during those critical days, Glancy had little to offer by way of concrete proposals for the rendress of grievances of the Muslims. Anway we shall not go into that as that would amount to stepping into the political field. Suffice it to say that the appointment of the two Commissions did not put an end to the agitation; not at least at Jammu.

Trouble broke out in Jammu Province against the end of November that yaar when Qazi Gauhar Rehman launched a non payment of rent campaign, evidently at the instigations of Ahrars of Punjab who had felt cut up at the victory won by their rivals, the Ahmedias, in Kashmir in forcing the government to appoint the two enquiry commissions Mirpur became the main centre of this campaign, to ensure the success of

which a large number of agents of Ahrars of Punjab had clandestinely entered the Mirpur district. With leaders making disobedience and violence an religious virtures, disturbances spread quickly to the entire province. As the situation was getting out of control, on 20 December the Government promulgated Notification No L-24 providing for enhanced punishment for nonpayment of Government dues and the army was deployed all over the Province, for the enforcement of the Notification, as under:-

Kashmir Body Guard Cavalry	- Mirpur 124- Rajauri-49	Total	173
4th Kashmir Infantry	- Mirpur 262- Rajauri-251	"	513
5th Kashmir Light Infantry	- Mirpur 61 -Bhimber-30) Budhal 30- RS Pura-30) Akhnoor 30)	"	121 178
6th Kashmir Infantry	- Mirpur-11 Platoons) Rajauri-1 Platoon) Bhimber-1 Platoon) Reasi 1½ Platoons) Ramban 1 Platoon)	"	474

Two mountain batteries (Ist and 3rd) with 425 infantry and 50 Cavalry were held as reserve at Jammu.

On 29 December 50 persons were arrested for non payment of Government dues in Mirpur and this set the ball rolling for the worst everm communal riots in the State. Although the Army was used extensively the situation could not be brought under control. Besides the fact that troops movement over such an extensive area was greatly hindered due to lack of communications and the difficult nature of the terrain, exservicemen from the Indian Army had joined the agitators and they fought pitched battles with the small isolated detachments of the State Forces. On 27 January 1932 thousands of armed Muslims laid seize to Mirpur town where about 1000 Hindu refugees were sheltered. Communal trouble also spread to Kotli, Rajauri, Poonch and Bhimber in which Hindus as a religious minority suffered terribly. As the situation went out of control, the State Government once again sought British help which was again promptly rendered and British troops arrived on 29 January 1932. They were despatched straight to Mirpur to relieve the State Force garrison there. Thereafter the entire Mirpur Tehsil was placed under a

British administrator, Mr Jardines, who was assisted by Colonel Baldev Singh Pathania as the State representative.

On the British troops taking over at Mirpur, the State troops were withdrawn from there and redeployed in other riot effected areas as under :-

	Inf	Cav
Kotli	125	-
Poonch	125	-
Poonch Mobile Column	125	-
Rajauri	125	50
Naushehra	125	25
Naushehra Mobile Column	~~125~~ 200	-
Bhimber	50	25
Akhnoor	50	25
Riasi	50	-
Total	975	125

Reserve at Jammu remained same as before.

The work done by the State troops before thex arrival of British troops and as was continued thereafter in areas other than Mirpur, was investigated by Colonel Baldev Singh. In his report the Colonel greatly commended the hard and sincere work put in by the State troops and he had a special word of praise for the cooperation among all ranks irrespective of their religion. He felt that the tropps were totally tired out due to constant marching and that the change in weather from the pleasant autumn when they had arrived to the peak winter through which they were now passing, without adequate warm clothing, had greatly affected their health. The troops had come on field scale and it was very difficult for them to continue on the same scale for long especially in view of the tents being insufficient. He brought the following names to the notice of the Government for the

good work done by them at Mirpur and Kotli[19]:

Major Akbar Khan	- 4th Kashmir Infantry
Captain Kirpal Singh	- 4th Kashmir Infantry
Captain Maluk Singh	- 5th Kashmir Light Infantry
Lieutenant Sher Ali	- 6th Kashmir Infantry
Risaldar Aladad Shah	Kashmir Body Guard Cavalry
Havildar Sunit Singh	- 4th Kashmir Infantry

Commenting on allegations that the local Muslim leadership had made against the army, Colonel Pathania reported that on investigation all of the them had been found to be false. In this connection it is interesting to note that one of allegations made by Chowdhury Ghulam Abbas (who was to the Jammu Muslims what Sheikh Abdullah was to the Kashmirs) was that the riots had been set off by the State Cavalry firing on a prayer congregation at Rajauri on 22 January. Even the British Resident whose sympathies had always lain with the agitators considered this allegation "so widely improbable as to carry its own reputation."[20]

The British troops withdrew in October 1932 and the State troops again took over responsibility of the area. The army then helped the civil authorities in rehabilitating the Hindus refugees. Searches were carried out and looted property was recovered and restored to the rightful owners.

REORGANISATION SCHEME 1931-33[21]

Infantry

Even as the army was engaged in rendering aid to civil authority in 1931-32, organisational changes were taking place with a view to place the units of the State Force exactly on the same standard with regard to their arms, equipments, establishment and strength, as the

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19. National Archives Crown Representative Records Foreign Pol file no 124(2)p (secret) 1932
20. Ibid Resident to Political Secy GOI file no 145 P (secret) 32/1932
21. Based on J&K Administative Reports 1931-33.

corresponding units of the Indian Army. Besides this, one more infantry battalion, the 7th Kashmir Infantry was raised on 10 March 1932. The Training Battalion which had been raised by Major Dhananter Singh earlier on 6 Marrch January the same year now had the responsibility of enlisting and training recruits for all the seven battalions. The 4th and the 6th Pioneers were converted into regular Infantry battalions while the Class composition of the 4th and the 6th remained the same as before that of the 7th Battalion was fixed as half Kangra Rajputs and half Jat Sikhs. The Training Battalion had of necessity to remain mixed being representative of all castes that were enlisted in the various infantry battalions. With the raising of the Training Battalion, the active battalions were relieved of the task of training their recruits and could now concentrate fully on their operational tasks.

Rank Structure

Some changes were also made in the rank structure. Of significance was the introduction of Brigadiers rank in 1931 when the Jammu and Kashmir Areas were converted into Brigades; each under a Brigadier. Amongthe Indian Officers, the rank of Subedar Major was sanctioned in 1932, the promotions for which were made in 1933 and Subedar Majors were posted one each to all infantry battalions, Body Guard Cavalry and Military Stores. In the Military Stores they replaced the Lieutenants to become officers commanding those units.

The Breeding Stables

The Breeding stables (with a total of 146 animals) was broken up in 1931. Some of the animals were disposed off to Cavalry and Artillery units while others were auctioned. Young mule foal were retained so that they may be supplied to units or auctioned after they grew up.[22]

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22. Jammu Archives Mil Block E.88 of 1931

Artillery

The designation of the Pack Batteries was again changed to that of Mountain Batteries. The organisation of the batteries, however, remained the same and they continued to be equipped with 2.75" BL Guns.

Military Engineering Service

A Military Sub Division for construction and repair of military barracks was established in 1933.

Rules and Regulations

Among the various rules and regulations sanctioned for the Kashmir Army during this period the following may be mentioned :-

(a) The Manual of Kashmir Military Law and Regulations prepared on the basis of the Manual of Indian Military Law in British India.

(b) Revised rates of pension for other ranks.

(c) Military Furlough and Leave Rules revised on the basis of Army Instructions in India.

The system of issue of General Orders by the Commander-in-Chief (GOCC) was suspended and Kashmir Army Orders were issued instead, on the lines of the Army Orders in India.

Appointments

Major General Janak Singh, who was the Army Minister, was relieved by Mr Wakefield in June 1931. After the dismissal of Mr Wakefield in August 1931, this portfolio was temporarily taken over by the new Prime Minister Raja Hari Krishan Kaul. In August 1932 the charge of the Army was transferred to the Minister in Waiting and after a month the post of the Army Minister was again created with Nawab Khusro Jang being appointed to it with the rank of Major General conferred on him.

Brig R O Sutherland, DSO, who had taken over as the Chief of the

Senior Officers Course 1929

Capt Onkar Singh Capt A R Khan Capt Nathu Capt Mohd Khan Capt Mikha Singh Capt Rumal Singh
Capt Basant Singh Maj A A Khan Capt Jaswant Singh, Lt Col Nasib Singh Capt Moti Singh Lt Col Shiv Ram Singh Maj Bahi Capt Nagam [illegible]
Lt Col Devi Singh Maj Baldev Singh Col Rahmat Ullah Khan Col R Anderson Gen Janak Singh Col Onkar Singh, Lt Col [illegible] Singh
Lt Col Parsidh Singh Lt Col Nand Lal

Sub Suchet Singh Capt N S Rawat

Army Training Staff 1934

Capt Sher Singh Capt Pir Singh

Major Khuda Bux G502 Colonel B S Pathania G501 Capt Adalat Khan

Lt Koripal Singh

Military Staff from Colonel R H Anderson with effect from 15 November 1930, and who had won the hearts of the State Forces for his loyalty towards them during the critical days of the agitation, died while on leave in England in 1933. His death was greatly mourned in the State. Brigadier D B Edwards took over as the Chief of the Military Staff after the death of Sutherland.

The need for the creation of the appointment of the Deputy Chief of the Military Staff had been felt since long, but although accepted in principle in 1926 no officer was posted to hold this appointment till 1932 when Lieut Colonel H S Stewart took over. The appointment of the Deputy Chief of Staff had become unavoidable that year due to the riots breaking out in Jammu Provinces and the Chief of Staff needing a helping hand. Thereafter the post remained filled by one British Officer or the other right upto the beginning of the 2nd World War. Lieut Colonel Stewart held this post only for one year and in 1933 he was succeeded by ~~Lt Col~~ Lieut Colonel P S Sangar. The appointment of Personal Assistant to the Chief of Staff was redesignated as Staff Officer (Administration) and Capt H S Rawat continued to hold this appointment.

Brigadier Onkar Singh held charge of Commander Kashmir Brigade and Brigadier Harnam Singh that of Commander Jammu Brigade in 1931. Brigadier Thakur* Rahmat Ullah Khan took over from Brigadier Onkar Singh at Srinagar and Brigadier Ghansar Singh from Brigadier Harnam Singh at Jammu in 1932. In 1935 the Jammu Brigade Commander and the Kashmir Brigade Commanders swapped over their appointments. Brigadier H L Scott C B , DSO, MC, psc, took over as the Chief of the Military Staff with effect from 23 November 1936 and ~~Lt Col~~ Lieut Colonel G H Critchley as the Deputy Chief of Staff with effect from April 1937.

The State Commissioned Officers.

It was now realised that if the standard of the State Force units was to be brought upto that of the corresponding units of the

* 'Thakur' was a State award ~~of the State~~ for distinguished service. Brigadier Rahmat Ullah Khan appears to have been the first and last recipient of this award.

Indian Army, there ~~was a need for~~ had to be more educated and better trained officers, with better knowledge of day to day events, to be placed in command of these units. This meant retirement on pension of a number of the old type. This in turn implied that not only was the standard of training of officers to be improved but also that the out put of officers from the Training School had ~~also~~ to be increased. Besides, there was a need for streamlinning the selection system to ensure that the right type of material was provided to the Training School. As a part of continued training, a system of attachment of newly Commissioned officers with regular Indian Army Units was adopted to assist the officers in remaining professionally upto date. Parmission of the Government of India was obtained for the State officers to appear in the promotion examinations held at different centres in India for British officers of equivalent rank. There was no compulsion for the State officers to pass these examinations before being promoted but clearing them certainly added to their qualification, and, what is more, gave them much confidence. As many as 101 State officers attended various schools of instructions in India from 1933 to 1935. Special detention allowance for officers, while on training in India was sanctioned to enable them to maintain their standard equivalent to their counterparts in the India Army.[23] The allowance was sufficient for an officer to hire a bungalow for himself and make his own food arrangements while on course.[24]

The year 1932 saw the establishement of the Indian Sandhurst in the form of the Indian Military Academy at Dehradun. The Indian States Forces were allotted 50 vacancies at the Academy per year of which the J&K State Force took the lions share of 3 vacancies per year.

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23. Ibid Mil Block E-66/1933 file 311-M-90

24. Interviews with old officers

Thereafter three probationary officers were detailed for course at the Indian Military Academy every year. The probationars were given some basic training at the J&K Training School before being sent to Dehradun.

LEASE OF GILGIT[25]

In the political field, much as the Maharaja was resisting at every step, the British had after the 1931-32 agitation secured his complete surrender. With the appointment of Colonel Colvin, an Indian Civil Service (ICS) Officer, as the Prime Minister of the State in February 1932 and three other ICS Officers as ministers for Home, Revnue and Police, the administration of the State could be said to being conducted under the direct orders of the Government of India. The gaining of control over the State was, however, only a means to an end; the end being, as has been noted earlier, to gain undisputed and unhindered control over the strategic area of Gilgit. To settle the matter once for all (and what could have been a more opportune moment then the present when the Majaraja was down and out), the British got the Maharaja to agree to the transfer of Gilgit territory to the British Indian Government on lease for a period of 60 years. The terms of the agreement which took effect from 01 August 1935 included the following :-

(a) That the civil and military administration of the entire Gilgit territory would be resumed by the Viceroy and the Governor General of India, although the territory would continue to be included within the dominion of the Majaraja.

(b) Customary salutes and honours would continue to be paid in the territory as hitherto and the flag of His Highness was to fly at the official headquarters of the Agency throughout the year.

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25. H L Saxena The Tragedy of Kashmir pp 301-324

(c) In normal circumstances, no British or British Indian troops would be despatched through that portion of Gilgit wazarat which lay beyond the left bank of Indus.

The direct result of this agreement as it effected the State Force was that all its troops in Gilgit area were withdrawn. Hence forth only a company post was required to be maintained at Bunji. Consequently the number of out posts on the frontier which was now required to be maintained by the State Force dropped to just four Viz (Bunji - one company ; Leh (one platoon), Kargil (one Section), and Skardu (one platoon). Troops for these out posts were to be provided by the battalions located at Srinagar, by rotation.[26]

REORGANISATION SCHEME- 1935-38[27]

Immediately after the transfer of the Trans Indus portion of Gilgit on lease to the Government of India some little reorganisation of the State Force was carried out as under :-

(a) The units were now designated (wef 1936) as Jammu and Kashmir units as against the earlier designation with the prefix of just Kashmir. The Ist Kashmir Infantryxx thus became the Ist Jammu and Kashmir Infantry and so on for other units.

(b) Transport arrangements for Gilgit by the Supply Department (Commissariate) ceased to exist in August 1935 and new agreements had to be made for the supply of rations to the company located at Bunji.

(c) A section of Mechanical Transport was raised by partial reduction of animal transport. The two were combined under the J&K Military Transport Corps which now comprised of 18 motor vehicles (17 Lorries 30 CWT and one van) and 230

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26. J&K Administrative Report 1937-38

27. Based on J&K Administrative Report 1937-38

Senior Officers Course 1927

Capta Mansa Ram Pritam Singh, Bakhaunta Singh, Abdul Majid, Jagan Nath — Baharhan Singh, Ajab Singh, N.S. Rawat, Hazra Singh, Dhanantar Singh, Lal Khan, M.N. Khan, Ali Bahadur, Harnam Singh, Col Onkar Singh, Col Durga Singh, Col Alexander, Col Sansar Singh, Col Rahmat Ullah, Col Lachman Singh, Ali Akbar, B.S. Pathania, Raghunath Singh, Shiv Ram, Narain Singh, Mohan Lal, Abdul Hamid, Kripal Singh, Adalat Khan, Hira Nand.

J & K Artillery Officers

animals. The strength of combatants stood at 165.

(d) The 3rd J&K Mountain Battery was disbanded in 1936

(e) Two active companies of infantry were added to the J&K Training Battalion.

(f) The Palace Guards were abolished as such and re-raised as the 5th Squadron of the J&K Body Guard Cavalry.

The J&K Training School

The re-organisation of the J&K Training School received the greatest attention during 1937-38. The status of candidates for commission in the State Force was changed from that of probationary Officers to that of Cadets. It was now made compulsory for cadets to gain the Indian Army Special Certificate of education within two years of admission to the J&K Training School, under pain of dismissals. To improve the educational standards a general educational establishment was added to the Training School. An English School master designated as the Chief Instructor Education was provided in the new establishment. The pay of the cadets was also revised. The intake of cadets remained to be about 7 to 8 cadets a year.

The Veternary Department

In view of the large number of animals on charge of the army (740 hourses, 749 mules and 76 Bullocks), the Veternary Department was given a bit of overhauling to ensure proper looking after of the animals' health. Three vetternary hospitals were established, one each at Satwari, Badami Bagh and Naushehra, which were to be controlled by the Senior Veternary Officer in the rank of Subedar with his headquarter at Satwari,. Subedar Asaf Khan became the first Senior Veternary Officer. Subsequently in 1938 the post of the Senior Veternary Officer was upgraded to the rank of a Lieutenant and Prem Nath Kak was appointed to it. He was given under him one 2nd Lieutenant and 6 other vetternary officers in the rank of Subedars and Risaldars.

The State Band

The organisation of the State Band was also revised. The Scale of uniform for the Band recruits was now fixed. Captain G P Brownhead took over as the State Band Master in 1937.

Artillery Training Centre

After the disbandment of the 3rd J&K Mountain Battery, J&K Artillery Training Centre was raised in 1937 and the strength of the S. State Artillery rather than declining in fact rose from 622 to 646.

Service Concessions

Some of the concessions that were announced for the Officers and men of the army in 1937-38 were as under :-

(a) The system of private ownership of chargers by infantry officers was replaced tentatively by Government owned chargers, for a period of 3 years.

(b) Frontier Command allowance at Rs. 30/- p.m. was sanctioned for all officers corps serving in Ladakh and the Cis Indus area.

(c) For the rank and file serving in the frontier areas, ration allowance was increased from Rs. 6/- to Rs. 10/- p.m.

(d) The service limit for grant of honorary rank of Jemadar was reduced from 28 years to 21 years and honorary rank of Lieutenant for Subedars and Subedar Majors was introduced.

(e) Pension Rules were revised on the basis of the Indian Army Pension Regulations wef November 1936 as under :-

(i) Sepoys, Sowars and Others - after 18 years service Rs. 5/- p.m.

(ii) Havildars and equivalant- after 18 years service Rs.7/- p.m.
After 21 years service Rs. 11/- p.m.

28

OTHER ACTIVITY- 1935-38

The Manoeuvre Area

The main activity of the troops between 1935 and 1938 centred

28. Based on J&K Administrative Reports 1935-38

around training- both individual and collective. As a result of the withdrawal of the Gilgit battalion the army could now meet the long felt need for organising a manoeuvre area and locating one battalion permanently in it for training. This was now organised at Naushahra and battalions from the Jammu Brigade were sent there one by one in rotation; each battalion moving out of the area only after it had been relieved by another. Naushahra made an ideal training area and the permanent presence of a battalion there gave the added advantage of having troops handy to deal with disturbances that often broke out in that region. The Military Advisor-in-Chief carried out his annual inspections regularly and all unit were well reported upon.

Routine Moves

With the responsibility for the defence of the Trans-Indus territory taken away the movement of troops was now confined to turn over at four frontier posts of Bunji, Leh, Skardu and Kargil which were manned by troops of the Kashmir Brigade. There was also the routine turn over of troops between the Srinagar and Jammu Cantonments. The Body Guard Cavalry less one squadron, a mountain battery, portion of the Military Transport Corps, the State Band and the J&K Training School moved to Srinagar with the Durbar during summer and returned with it to Jammu during winter each year.

Refugees From Chinese Turkistan

A flutter was caused during the autumn of 1937 when as a result of the distrubed state of Chinese Turkestan (Sinkiang), refugees from that territory started arriving in Ladakh fully armed. It was then found that less than a platoon (out of the total strength of 50) could be made available at Leh for the active support of the civil authority in disarming the refugees and for the maintanance of law and order. The refugees, however, remaindd peaceful and allowed themselves to be disarmed without resistance. Had they resisted the troops would not have been sufficient to enforce law. Considering the fact that there

was no regular police force in the District, the military garrison at Leh was made up to a full company and mobile medical units were provided to it as a permanent feature. Strength of the Skardu and Kargil detatchments remained the same as before.[29]

Anti Kuth Smuggling

Anti Kuth Smuggling activity of the troops continued unabated. As a matter of convenience the company at Bunji was henceforth depolyed as under :

(a) One platoon at Astore ready to assist the civil and forest area authorities should need for such an assistance arise.

(b) Company less platoon to be located at Rattu ready to assist the civil and the forest authorities against Kuth smugglers and cattle lifters at short notice.

This was to be the deployment of the company during summer. In winter each year (by 15th November or so) the entire company was to be withdrawn to Bunji.

No sooner had these arrangements been made than a platoon of the 4th J&K Infantry located at Rattu was requisitioned by the forest authorities in September 1937 for action against the Yaqustani Kuth smugglers. The platoon had an encounter with smugglers on 13th and 14th September in whdch 3 smugglers were apprehended and 40 maunds (about 1500 kg) of Kuth was confiscated. Such activity of the Bunji Company thereafter became a regular affair each year.[30]

Law and Order Duties

Demands continued to be made on the army for aid to the civil authorities in dealing with violent activities of the political agitators. The scene of such activities had, however, now shifted

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29. Jammu Archives Mil Block C-30 of 1937 file no 87/c/94-96 of 1937

30. Ibid Block C-29 of 1937 file 86-c/93-94 of 1937

to the Poonch Jagir. Two detatchments of the 5th Battalion were despatched to Poonch in 1936 on being requisitioned by the civil administration there. They were withdrawn after law and order had been restored. A similar demand was again made in 1937 when two companies of the Suraj Gorkha under Lieut Colonel Ram Lal were despatched from Srinagar to Poonch in aid of civil authority. This time Brigadier Scott, the Chief of Staff, also accompanied the troops to Poonch. The Companies were withdrawn after the rule of law had been established in the Jagir.

The Military Medical Department

The charge of the Military Medical Department during the period from 1935 to 1937 was held by Lieut Colonel GM Millar OBE, IMS, who was also the Director of Medical Services in the State. The two military hospitals one each at Satwari and Badami Bagh Cantonment were commanded by Lieut Colonel Nand Lal and Captain Rattan Lal respectively. The period was on the whole a healthy one from the medical point of view. There were no epidemics and there was a marked decrease in malaria cases, particularly in 1935-36 when they came down to half of what they were the previous year. The fall in malaria cases was the result of the strict enforcement of the 'Quinine Parade' under the direct supervision of Medical Assistants. Cases of other ailments, like jaundice, pneumonia and VD were also considerably less.

In 1938 Colonel Nand Lal Chopra took over as the Senior Medical Officer. He had under him three majors, two captains and 19 sub assistant surgeons (Subedars/Jamedars). The administrative charge of the Medical Department, however, continued to be held by Lt Col J J Harper Nelson, CIE, OBE, MC, MD, MRCPE, FRCS, IMS (retd) who had now taken over as the Director Medical Services in the State.

Military Farms

The Military Farms had gradually grown into a great economic asset to the army. In 1935-36, 1.084 lakh maunds of fodder valued at

Rs. 1.34 lakhs of rupees was produced and the fodder requirement of the army was for the most part met by the Military Farms during all the subsequent years.

Military Forts[31]

Consequent upon the reorganisation of the army in 1921-23 certain forts held by the army were brought under reduction; the forts generally having little value in view of the changed methods of warfare. The forts thus reduced, were transferred to the Revenue Department. When the maintenance of these forts posed a problem to the Revenue Department and it sought funds for the purpose from the State Council, the C. in C then opined that repair of forts of absolutely no military value would be a waste of money. Consequently the Maharaja set up a committee headed by T Thakur Kartar Singh to go into the necessity of retention or otherwise of forts, considering their military importance as also historical background. The matter, however, seems to have lingered on till 1936 when it cropped up again and another committee consisting of Major General Janak Singh, Brigadier Ghansara Singh and headed again by Thakur Kartar Singh, Brigadier was set up to go into the matter and decide the issue once for all. The Committee after some deliberations, finally recommended the retention of four forts by the army in Jammu, namely Bahu, Mangla Mai, Tharochi, Salal and four in Kashmir Province viz Sharda Ji, Leh, Hari Parbat, and Muzaffarabad. Three forts were recommended for retention as historical monuments to be maintained by the Public works Department. These were Akhnoor, Gajpat Garh, and Ramnagar. His Highness the Maharaja as the C. in-C State Force was, however, averse to the maintance of forts from military funds and to garrisoning them unless there were strong military or political reasons for doing so. Consequently he slashed the list further when it was put up to him and decided that only the following forts be maintained by the military :-

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31. Based on Jammu Archives Mil Block K-22 of 1932 file 34-M-78 (Pt III) and Mil Block G-30 of 1937 file no 87/0/94-95.

1937
Coronation

Brigadier Ghansar Singh (extreme right) as the State representative at the Coronation parade in England 1937

(a) Bahu Fort: with a view to gun salutes being fired from here on ceremonial occasions.

(b) Mangla Mai Fort: with a view to affording protection to the Mangla Canal head.

(c) Hari Parbat Fort: with a view to gun salutes being fired from here on ceremonial occasions.

(d) Leh Fort: in view of its strategic importance, being on the border and on the important Highway from Chinese Turkistan. The fort personnel could also augment the strength of the small garrison located here to deal with internal security or an external raid should such a need arise.

The fort guards were uptill now enlisted direct for this service and most of their Indian Officers and NCOs were promoted from among them. The training of these guards went but a little beyond the firing of gun salutes. Yet in times of unrest there could be occasions when small parties of them could be called upon to defend isolated forts; a duty calling for the exercise of soldierly qualities of a higher degree. The Army Minister, Nawab Khusro Jang, therefore, recommended that the fortsmen be henceforth enlisted from soldiers of the State Force who had earned their first pension. This was duly approved by Commander-in-Chief. He also ordered that fortmen who were considered below the required standard be weeded out. The historical background and strategic importance of some forts is given at appx. D

ARMY ON THE EVE OF WORLD WAR II

The year 1939 saw the out break of the second World War. By then the reorganisation of the army, to bring its units at par with the corresponding units in the Indian Army, had been completed and the troops could be considered to have been at the peak of their efficiency due to the sincere and hard training that had been carried out during the period intervening the two Wars. How these troops fared in the second war forms the subject matter of the next chapter. We may therefore, close here by just giving out what the State Army looked like on the eve of the 1939-45 war. The authorised strength of the army then was 9078 all ranks and these were distributed in the

various units as under [32]:-

Administrative staff	- 74
Command Staff	- 25
J&K Body Guard Cavalry	- 917
J&K Infantry Battalions	- 5772
J&K Training Battalions	- 709
J&K Training School	- 29
Mountain Batteries (2) and Artillery Training Centre	- 652
Total First Line	- 8178
State Band	- 85
Military Transport & Supply	- 196
Military Stores	- 57
Military Medical Department	- 196
Forts	- 126
Farms	- 213
Veternary Cadre	- 27
Total Auxillary	- 900
GRAND TOTAL	- 9078

Inspite of the increased strength the total expenditure on the Army stood at Rs. 23,50,284/- as against the expenditure of Rs. 42,59,000/- during the financial year 1930-31. This was largely due to most of the construction works having been completed and the State's responsibility for the defence of the Gilgit frontier having been taken off. Partly it may have also been due to the State military budget having been more streamlined.

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32. J&K Administrative Report 1938-39.

CHAPTER VII

WORLD WAR II - 1939-45

THE BACKGROUND

The peace that was ushered in after the First World War had always been an uneasy one. Although there was no war during the next 20 years, the threat had cropped up every now and then. The Germans had no doubt accepted military defeat but they had not accepted the peace that was thrust on them through the Treaty of Versailles. Germany had been deprived of her colonies and quite a lot of its territory and population. Besides, the Reparation Clause in the Treaty was known to be most unjust and one that was aimed at beaking Germany economically. In short the Germans considered the peace as dictated and never felt morally bound to adhere to the terms and conditions of the Treaty. Consequently Germany had been on the look out for an opportunity to cut the shackles with which she had been bound by the Treaty of Versaillas. This opportunity came by way of the growing clash of interests between the major powers of Europe, each of whom planned to use Germany against the other for its own ends. This infighting among the European powers had left the League of Nations defunct and Germany could now flout the terms of the peace treaty with impunity. The rise of Nazism and the emergence of the leader of the Calibre of Hitler within Germany gave her the capability of exploiting the situation for growing militarily from strength to strength. Subsequently, when it was realised that Germany had grown dangerously strong, the fear of an armed conflict with her made the other military powers of Europe to follow a policy of appeasment; which, infact, brought the prospects of a war even closer.

When Germany was fully geared up for war, Hitler began to exploit the problem of minorities with which Europe was faced then. The promise of President Wilson to grant the right of self-determination to these minorities had remained unfulfilled despite the creation

of a number of small new states; the process having had to be stopped due to economic, geographic and political considerations while and the fate of millions of Germans living in Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia and other countries outside Germany had, therefore, remained undecided. Hitler now encouraged these minorities to clamour for the merger of the territories, in which they resided, with Germany and came out openly in their support. Not a single year passed without the Polish Germans moving the League of Nations against the 'injustices' meted out to them by the Polish Government. The cause of the ill treated people was then backed by Hitler with threats of war, for which Europe was least prepared.

The twenty years of peace was finally shattered when Germany invaded Poland on 01 September 1939. The war, so started, remained localised only for 48 hours before Britain and France joined in on 03 September by declaring war on Germany. For some time the main participants in the War remained to be Germany and Itlay, known as the 'Axis Powers' on one side and Britain and France, termed as the 'Allies' on the other. Gradually, however, as the War progressed, practically all the countries of the world got engulfed in it and justifiably the war came to be known as the second World War.

The Maharaja's Offer

Although the war actually broke out on 01 September, its imminence was fairly clear by 23 August while the British and French negotiations with Hitler headed for a dead lock. Reacting to the tense situation in Europe His Highness the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir sent the following telegram to His Excellency the Viceroy of India on 24 August.

"Last night wirelessed news sounded ominous. I hope I am wrong and the worse may yet be averted. But if not, the whole Empire must meet the resulting aggression on peace loving humanity and defend the sanctity of hearth and home and the cause of honour. I depricate publicity and am loath to speak

personally but I do desire Your Excellency and through you the King Emperor toknow that if war comes, Kashmir may be depended upon to do what Kashmir has ever done since coming under the aegis of His Britannic Majesty; and of course my personal services are always and will be, in the event of war, at His Majesty's disposal."[1]

Simultaneous to the above offer being made the Maharaja earmarked two units of the State Force for Imperial Service and placed them at the disposal of the Viceroy of India while orders were issued for the recall of all officers and men of the army on leave and for their joining their respective units immediately. The Maharaja's anticipatory action had been so fast that the day after the War actually broke out all the units of the State Force stood mobilised for war, and in a state of readiness to march out at short notice. All these units were then placed at the disposal of the British Government. The Maharaja then made an impassioned appeal to the Dogras in general and Rajputs in particular to help in the war effort by enrolling themselves in the army either in the State or the Indian Army. He was quite aware of the political differences India had with Britian but feltthat India must stand shoulder to shoulder with Britain in this hour of emergency while the settlement of the independence issue must await the return of peace In order to induce his people to lend whole hearted support to the cause, his appeal was supplemented by the following proclamation issued by his Government:

"His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur with his unfailing regard for his subjects in general and army in particular, has been graciously pleased to order that the officers and men of the units of his army who may be sent on active service shall continue to receive their pay and ration allowance from the State

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1. Jammu and Kashmir Information April 1944 issued by the Bureau of Information His Highness' Government.

"As field rations and other field requirements are sure to be provided by the British Government, His Highness has ruled that the State shall not save the ration allowance but during the absence of the units from the State, pay that allowance to the families of those who are on active service and such payments shall continue until the mobilised units remain on service out side the State.

"Let every man who may hereafter enlist under His Highness' banner realise that when he goes to fight at the binding of his master he does so as a soldier of a sovereign who will not only look after him while he is on the battle field, but also lookafter his family. And should he lose his life, his master will, in the absence of the bread winner, not leave his family uncared for.

"So far as those are concerned who are already serving in some unit or the other of His Highness' army let themselves and their families take heart that the master who may order them to go and fight, will make it as his case to do all that is possible not to allow their families to suffer destitution or to be involved in abject poverty."[2]

The response to the Maharaja's appeal was tremendous and right through the period of the War there never was a dearth of recruits for not only the State Force but also the Indian Army. In the first five years of the war some 51,000 recruits were enlisted for the fighting forces of which 6000 joined the State Force and the rest, the Indian Army. Considering that the total population of Jammu Province was a little over 40 lakhs which included women, children, the old and the infirm and a large section of the non-martial races, not many able bodied and young members of the fighting classes among the Dogras could have remained out of military service during the War.[3]

2. Ibid
3. Ibid

THE IST J&K MOUNTAIN BATTERY:[4]

The Ist J&K Mountain Battery was the first unit of the J&K State Force to leave the State for service under the Crown and also perhaps the first Indian State Forces unit to go into action in the Second World War. The advance party consisting of one State Officer and 20 Other Ranks left Jammu cantonment for Secundrabad (Deccan) on 01 October 1939, followed by the rest of the Battery under the command of Lt Col Sherbaz Khan and accompained by the British Special Service Officers (SSOs) on 13 October.

At Secundrabad the Battery formed part of the 5th Indian Division which was mobilised for service overseas and was now undergoing some intensive training. The Battery was, here, re-equipped with the 3.7 Inch Howitzer and the training necessitated by the change was duly carried out.

Some how, it was not before the end of August 1940 that the 5th Indian Division received its orders for move to the war front, even then but due to lack of adequate number of ships, the Battery could not move with the Division and its move was delayed till 22 September 1940, when it actually left Secundrabad for Bombay by a special train. By then Lt Col Sher Baz Khan had been replaced in Command of the Battery by Major Bhagwan Singh and onMajor Morley being posted out Captain Carbett had been promoted Major and had taken over as the senior SSO. Captain Oliver accompanied the Battery as the other SSO. The Battery embarked HMIS "Khandala" at the Alexandra Docks on the very day of its arrival at Bombay on 24 September, and sailed for an undisclosed destination the next day.

The Battery had been at sea for 13 days when on 6 October 1940 four mules died on beard the ship due to heat and most of the others

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4. Based on Historical Section Ministry of Defence file no 601/7983/H and War on Two Fronts by Lt Col Bhagwan Singh.

had begun to feel sick. Consequently permission for the ship to leave the convoy and move independently was sought and, on this being granted, the ship made for Port Sudan, which was reached on 7 October. Here the Battery disembarked immediately but the mules had been so sick that two died even after disembarkation. The mules being so out of condition it was decided to let them remain behind at Port Sudan for a few days of rest, while the rest of the Battery entrained for Gedraf on 10 October.

The Battery joined the 5th Indian Division at Gedraf and immediately busied itself with training and field routine in the defensive positions which the Division had occupied. The Italians had established themselves well in Abysinia and Eritria and the British had adopted a defensive porture while they were building up their strength for the ultimate offensive.

The Institution of SSOs Challenged

While the Battery was at Gedraf it was beset with a problem quite unique in nature. Friction had developed between the Batttery Commander Major Bhagwan Singh and the Senior SSO Major Carbet over matters of Command. The quarrel was not personal in any way but only over matter of principle and the right of the State Force Officers, to command. It may be remembered that the SSOs were attached to State Force units proceeding on active service as required by the Mobilisation Regulations for the Indian State Forces (ISF). These SSOs though apparently there to function as advisors to the State Force Officers Commanding the unit, had in fact powers to remove the unit commander from his command under circumstances when reference to higher authority was not immediately possible. This had naturally enabled them to function as de-facto defence to commanders of the State Forces units to which they were attached. We have seen how during operations in Hunza, Nagar and Chitral at the close of the 19th Century young British Officers of the rank of the Lieutenants and Captains were given charge of operations

over the heads of very senior State Force Officers. The position was very humiliating for the State Force Officers. So humiliating, in fact, that the British Officers had themselves wondered whether the system would work without any friction being caused, when it was first put to test in the campaigns on the Gilgit frontier. The situation over the years had but slightly improved in that the SSOs being now attached were of the same rank as that of the unit commander so that the State Force Officer was no longer pushed around by a British Officer of junior rank. But pushed around he still was; making the position intolerable to any self respecting State Force Officer. With the State Force Officers now at par with the British Officers, both with regard to their education as well as professional efficiency, the system needed to be changed but none had moved in this regard. For the British the question was perhaps linked with their general policy of discrimination against Indians, which they followed even in the Indian Army where independent command of troops by Indians was withheld by not promoting them to any rank higher than that of a major and even restricting their appointments to those of sub unit commanders or junior level staff officers.

Whatever may have been the reasons for continuance of the institution of the SSOs, the fact remained that it was bound to result in an anomally of dual command unless the unit commander resigned to the situation and voluntarily took the back seat. This Major Bhagwan Singh was perhaps not prepared to do and right from the day of his taking over the Battery he began asserting this right ~~from the day of his taking over the Battery he began asserting his right~~ to command, ~~and~~ insisting on the SSOs strictly performing the role ~~as~~ of advisers and nothing more. Legally the SSOs could not object to the Battery Commander's stand, for, on paper they were advisors and there was no regulation which could compell the Battery Commander to accept their advice unless he wished to do so. The SSOs had, therefore, looked for an opportunity to make use

of their power to remove the Battery Commander from command on grounds of inefficiency. The ship, where reference to higher authority could not have been made, was the right place for such an action by the senior SSO, and Major Carbet had used his powers for the removal of the Battery Commander from Command while on board the 'Khandala'. However on Major Bhagwan Singh refusing to go out of Command (literally) the matter had ended there. On reaching Gedraf the Battery Commander reported about what had taken place on 'Khandala' to the General Officer Commanding the 5th Division and through his intervention the case was patched up; at least for the time being.

On 7 November 1940 the Battery received orders for move to Showak an out-post some forty miles to the east on the left bank Atbara River. The Battery moved to Showak by train and got their first battle innoculation while it was moving in a convoy from Showak Railway station to the camping ground two miles away. As the convoy moved out of the railway station in the moon-lit night, it was attacked by an enemy aircraft. The plane dropped some thirty anti-personnel bombs all along the length of the convoy from front to rear but did not cause much damage due to the men having debussed and taken postions on a timely air alarm sounded by the Battery Commander himself.

At Showak the Battery formed part of a small independent force in combination with an infantry battalion located at Showak with one of its companies holding a forward defended locality at Abuderisa, some 30 miles forward, near the Eritrea- Abysinia border. The mules which had been left behind at Port Sudan on disembarkation rejoined the Battery at Showak on 9 November.

On 19 November one section of the Battery which had since been motorised was sent forward under Captain Amar Nath (Lakhanpal), and accompanied by Captain Oliver as the SSO, to Abuderisa in support of the infantry company at this forward defended locality. While the sub-unit was crossing the river under the supervision of the Battery

Commander, Major Carbet, who had perhaps begun to feel left out in all the major activities of the Battery, expressed his unhappiness over the manner in which the section had crossed the river. This led to a wordy dual between the Battery Commander and the Senior SSO and the friction between the two which had lain dormant all these days surfaced again. The Battery Commander then wrote a long latter to the Commander Royal Artillary (CRA) 5th Indian Division on the intolerable situation created by the SSO by striving to command in the name of advice. It is a historic letter reflecting the great strength of conviction, moral courage, and extreme self confidence of the State Force Officer, which resulted in the immediate removal of the Senior SSO from the Battery and the ultimate removal of SSOs from all the units of the Indian State Forces and is therefore considered worthy of being reproduced here. The relevent portions of the letter read as follows:-

"Since our last talk on the subject and the Div Comdr's interview I had made it a point to work in such a way that the existing impression, that I had been lacking in cooperation no longer exists, even if by doing so my position as a Bty Comdr was slightly degraded. On the other hand Major Carbet also tried to refrain from interfering in my duties and limited his activities to helping and advising, and all went on very well. But he seems to be fed up with his present position now and wants more authority and command in the name of advice. His point of view, as I have been able to understand it, is that that I should do every thing with his permission and always do everything as he wishes. He has again started to find faults with me and is changing changing his position from an helper and advisor to that of a critic, examiner and commander..... "I know that Major Carbet is an efficient officer and I have great regard for his views, but this does not mean that he is never wrong. I am certain that if he had been in a regular battery, most of his methods and plans, which he now thinks are the only correct ones, would have been rejected by

his battery commander..... I would like to point out that although I belong to the State Forces I have had the chance of spending sometime in the Indian Army and in addition to my attachments with two mountain batteries and one Infantry battalion of the Indian Army I have attended Indian and British officers courses at Kakul, Army Signal School Poona and Senior Officers School Indian State Forces, all of them with excellent results. In some of the British Officers courses I was considered above the average. According to the Military Advisor in Chief's annual reports I am one of the few Commanding Officers of the Indian State Forces units who are considered 'fit to command in war' ~~in war~~ ..... "I have great desire to fulfil the object for which we have come here in a most praise worthy manner and to avoid anything which is going to effect adversely the fulfilment of this object.

"May I therefore request you to kindly go through all the letters etc issued from time to time by the concerned authorities regarding our positions and show us some rough lines on which to work. I only wish that the SSO could help me and advise me instead of criticising and examining and could refrain from passing disrespectful remarks.

"I am not writing this as a compalaint against Major Carbet but only to get your advice in order to stop unhappy occurences as these in future, which however negligible they may be, tend to effect the efficiency of the unit. We are, however, working with some harmony as we were before and hope will continue to do so".[5]

The letter had the desired effect and the Commander Royal Artillery (CRA) wrote back to the Battery Commander on 03 December as follows :-

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5. Lt Col Bhagwan Singh War on Two Fronts pp 39-42

"With reference to your letter No: 2/Conf dated 25 November'40 I am exceedingly sorry to hear that in spite of all my efforts to smooth matter the friction was still occuring.

"It has been decided that more harm than good is being done by Major Carbet remaining as SSO in your battery. I am therefore issuing orders for his posting elsewhere. I cannot tell you at the moment whether or not another officer will be posted to you in his place but it is unlikely. In any case no posting can take place for some considerable time. I hope you will thoroughly appreciate that the withdrawal of Major Carbet will throw the entire responsibility of the running of your battery on to your shoulders." [6]

The removal of Major Carbett was, however, given effect to by orders on telephone simultaneous to the issue of the CRA's letter. The removal of Major Carbett was perhaps an administrative action at the GOC's level but there can be little doubt that the matter had been taken up with the highest authority for seeking a permanent solution to the problem which included a change in policy with regard to attachement of the SSOs with State Force unit on their mobilisation for active service. When General Sir Claud Auchinlek C-in-C visited the Battery at Showak on 09 January 1941 he took the Battery Commander aside to ask him if he had any problem. The Battery Commander took this opportunity to bring to the notice of the General his difficulty in putting on with the SSOs. On being asked by the General if he could carry on without the SSOs, Major Bhagwan Singh gave him full assurance of complete efficiency without them. It was perhaps because of this that no effort was made to replace the senior SSO and in due course the second SSO was also removed from the Battery.[7]

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6. Ibid p 43
7. Ibid p 43-44

The 'Otun' Force

On 12 January 1941 the rest of the Battery and the remaining companies of the 2/5 Maharattas (old spelling) also moved forward to Abunderisa as part of the general offensive launched by the 5th and the 4th Indian Divisions. The Battery mules, however, stayed back at Showak. At Abundersia a force called 'Otun Force', consisting of one squadron Horsed Free French Cavalry, the J&K Mountain Battery less one section, one company Motorised Infantry Sudan Defence Force and 2/5 Maharattas less two companies, was constituted for the purpose of making close contact with the enemy. The force moved out of Abudersia on 21 January and took up an offensive/defensive position five miles inside enemy territory. The enemy opposing the 'Otun Force' consisted of approximately one Infantry Battalion supported by a cavalry regiment, one Pack Artillary Group and a section of field guns. In reaction to the move of the 'Otun Force' the enemy sent out patrols that tried to work round the left flank of the position occupied by the Force. The Battry thus got its first chance of engaging the enemy and the very first group of shells directed by the Battery Commander's from his Observation Post (OP) fell right amidst the enemy, forcing him to scatter and withdrew. Salvo after salvo followed the first, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy till the disappeared in the jungle". "Damn nice shooting" exclaimed the Force Commander who had been watching the shoot and the Battery had become very popular among the units of the 'Otun Force' after its very first engagement with the enemy.

A few days later, one of our motorised machine gun companies was able to work its way behind the enemy position at Om Hagger. Finding himself pressed from both the sides, the enemy vacated Om Hagger on 26 January 1941, leaving behind large quantities of arms, ammunition and other stores. The 'Otun Force' also took some hundreds of the enemy as prisoners as it triumphantly entered the town. After this small action the 'Otun Force' less the J&K Mountain Battery pressed forward in pursuit of the retreating enemy. The Battery had to of necessity to stay behind for want

of mechanical transport.

The Battle of Keren

In the meantime the bulk of the 5th Indian Division in conjunction with the 4th Indian Division had invaded Eritrea and after capturing Agordat and Barentu was in hot pursuit of the enemy, as he withdrew to his positions at Keren (also spelt Cheren). The 'Otun Force' (less the Battery) had joined the 5th Division at Agordat and had ceased to exist under that name. On reaching Keren, closely on the heels of the enemy, the two Indian Divisions launched an immediate attack in the hope of taking the positions before the enemy had the time to settle down in his defences. The enemy positions at Keren which covered the approach to Asmara, (the capital of the colony), had however, been constructed over a considerable period of time and were too strong for a hurried attack and none of the Divisions was able to make any head-way against them. Consequently the two Divisions took up defensive positions opposite Keren and set about reorgansing and training for the next attack.

Mechanical transport having been made available to the J&K Battery, it moved to Tessinei where, a few days later, its mules joined up. The whole Battery thus marched some 150 miles to join the 5th Division, 15 miles ~~north~~ short of the Keren positions, on 14th March. It had been a treacherous march through waterless country where special arrangements for drinking water being brought in trucks at each halt, had to be made. Nevertheless the Battery covered the distance in eight days, at the average rate of about 18 to 19 miles a day, (33 miles on a particular day) to joine the Division just in time for the offensive which commenced on 15th March 1941.

At Keren the enemy was holding strongly prepared defensive positions on the rugged rock-covered mountains on each side of and commanding the gorge through which passed the road and the railway to Asmara. Strong concrete positions had been prepared on the hill tops and the slopes commanding all approaches. The road was constructed with

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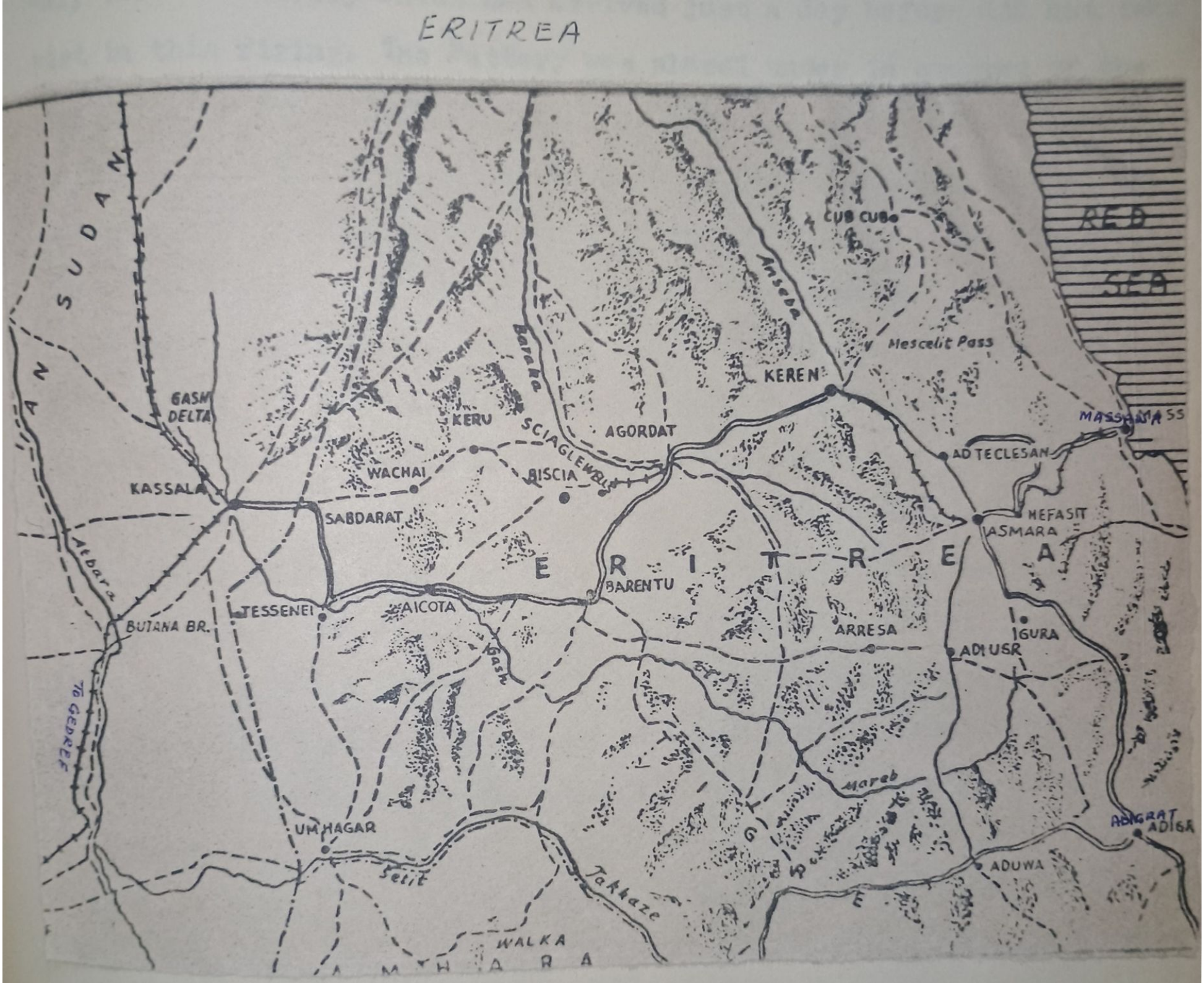

SUDAN
RED SEA
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Mescelit Pass
KEREN
Baraka
GASH DELTA
KERU
SCIAGLEWELL
AGORDAT
MASSAWA
AD TECLESAN
WACHAI
BISCIA
KASSALA
SABDARAT
HEFASIT
ASMARA
ERITREA
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AMHARA

numerous road blocks all of which were covered from strong concrete machine guns and mortar posts. The attack on these positions by the 4th and the 5th Indian Divisions began with intensive bombardment by the entire artillary of the two divisions at 0700 ~~hrs~~ hours on 15 March. Only the J&K Battery which had arrived just a day before did not take part in this firing. The Battery was placed under in command of the 10th Infantry Brigade which was to go into the attack during the second phase. As per plan the first phase was to be completed within 24 hours of its start but in actual practice it was not over till about 25th March after which the second phase began and the Battery got an opportunity to go into action. It had been a long wait for the officers and men of the Battery who were itching to prove their worth in action and allay the fears of most commanders that the Battery may not, after all, be able to function efficiently without the guidance of the British SSOs. But the wait had not been without interest. Captain Oliver, the remaining SSO, having, perhaps, no heart left in his job after Major Carbett had been removed so uncermoniously, had long since taken refuge in a hospital overa minor ailment. When the hospitals were ordered to discharge all officers with minor ailments so that they may be utilised for the attack on Keren, Captain Oliver also was returned to join the Battery. However, as the Battery was complete in its officers strength and the Battery Commander was determined to keep the Battery free of British Officers no job, other than that of the Mess Secretary was allotted to Oliver, making the situation rather amusing. The Commander Artillery intervened and tried to persuade Major Bhagwan Singh to allot some task to Captain Oliver be it as a subordinate, but when the Battery Commander would not budge, he had Oliver posted out before the Battery went into action.[8] So when the Battery ultimately want into action it was entirely under its own officers. As very few Indians, if at all there were any, were given

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8. Ibid pp 56-57

command of a unit even in the Indian Army till then, Major Bhagwan Singh could perhaps claim the distinction of being not only the first Indian State Forces Officer to command a unit in war, but also that of being one of the first few Indians to independently command in war a unit ~~top to bottom Indian~~ which was completely Indian.

Ten days bitter fighting had followed the opening of the attack on 15th March with portions of enemy positions being taken, lost to counter attacks and retaken. The main effort had been directed against the enemy's right which the 4th Indian Division was trying to outflank without much success. The 5th Indian Division during this struggle had, however, been able to make some gains. By 21 March it had succeeded in securing a foot hold on some parts of the long ridge, called the Camaeron Ridge, on the enemy's left. ~~forming the right of the enemy's position and called Camaeron Ridge.~~ It was now time for the 10th Brigade to go into action with the J&K Battery in direct support. The Battery completed the registration of targets in its allotted zone and was ready for action on 23 March. The attack of the 10th Brigade which was scheduled for the 24th could not, however, be launched on that date as dumping of supplies and ammunition on forward posts, which was necessary for further advance, had not yet been completed. In order to expedite the dumping programme the Battery Commander allowed the use of his Ordnance mules for the purpose and because of this cooperative gesture the Brigade was able to lunch its attack on 25th March.

In the first phase of the attack by the 10th Infantry Brigade one of its battalions was to attack and capture hill top which was supposedly occupied by the enemy and from where he was believed to be covering the road block with its medium machine guns(MMGs). The success signal on the capture of this feature was to be the start time for the main attack. This attack did not, however, succeed as ~~it~~ was reported to be strongly held by the enemy and naturally no success signal came. The Battery was then given the task of destroying the

MMGs that were holding up the infantry battalion. The Brigade Commander himself pointed out to the forward observation Officer(FOO) Captain Ashan Ali, pin point targets which were suspected to be enemy MMG Posts. Although these were successfully engaged and direct hits scored, the enemy MMGs continued to remain active as their actual positions could not be located. A lot of shooting was then conducted from the main observation post on different targets that looked like MMG Posts. The actual MMG Post was at last located by the J&K Battery and the gun was silenced after it received a direct hit. It then became possible for the Royal Engineers to start demolishing the road block and repairing the road. This achievement of the Battery was particularly mentioned in the Intelligence Summary of the Division in the following words:

> "Infantry were able to go forward to the demolition and deliver explosives though they could not engage some enemy MGs which were causing trouble and which it was hoped they might silence. J&K Mountain Battery, however, settled this with a direct hit on one of the guns."[9]

As the Battery was so engaged its wagon linne was heavily shelled by the enemy, resulting in 5 animals being wounded. There were, however, no casualties among the men who remained calm and cool and in full control of the mules.

Next day, shooting by observation was carried out again to silence the remaining MMGs that were likely to interfere with the advance. The Brigade Commander was again up in the front and himself pointed out targets to the ~~officers of the Battery manning~~ Battery Commanders massing at the Observation posts (OPs). The Battery engaged these targets with great accuracy which was very much appreciated by the Brigade Commander. The work on the repair of the road, however, continued to be hindered by the enemy, from his

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9. Historical Section Ministry of Defence file no 601/7983/M[H] Battery Commanders Report on the Campaign.

positions on two little hills which dominated the road. It was, therefore decided to secure these two positions on the enemy side of the road block so that the road could be repaired and made ready for the advance by the Division at the earliest. Consequently a proper attack supported by the whole Divisional artillary was launched on the two hillocks, on 27 March. The J&K Battery was allotted the difficult task of of firing a Creeping Barrage in front of the advancing infantry. The task was difficult as it had to be fired during the hours of darkness (early morning on 27 March) over an area narrower at the farther end than at the nearer end and sloping towards one side with a difference in angle of sight of 4 degrees between its two sides. Besides, it was flanked by the railway line on the one side and the road on the other, neither of which was to receive any hits, whatever the circumstances. Nevertheless, in what could be considered its greatest achievement during war, the Battery escorted the infantry safely on to the objective behind an accurately fired Barrage.

This attack which was launched with the limited intention of capaturing just two hill features dominating the road block, in fact, dislodged the enemy from all his positions at Cheren, as the road lay open and his rear was threatened. Cheren, defences of which the Italians took pride in calling impregnable, was thus now in British hands and the enemy now in full retreat towards Asmara.

The 5th Indian Division then lost no time and went in hot pursuit of the enemy. All its units moved out again in their unit transport but the Mountain Battery which had no transport of its own had to follow on foot.

Battle of Ad Teclesan

On the evening of the first days march the GOC 5th Division and his CRA arrived at the Battery's camp rather unexpectedly and told the Battery Commander that the Mountain Battery was required forward to deal with another road block on the road to Asmara. The road block was

covered so well with enemy fire from concealed positions that the ~~Divisional~~ advance of the Division had been held up and the services of the Mountain Battery were needed badly as the country was unsuitable for the deployment of mechanised field batteries. The Battery Commander was asked to report to 29th Infantry Brigade for orders next morning and was provided with the necessary transport for himself and his reconnaissance party. The Battery came into action on the reverse slopes of a hill unnoticed by the enemy although the move was made in broad day light. In the meantime only one troop of a British field battery had managed to come into action by the side of the road; the ground not permitting the deployment of any more field guns. The whole front of the division was then divided into two zones and one each was allotted to the Mountain Battery and the field troops. The Observation Posts of both the units, manned by their respective battery commanders, were located on the same hill. The British Battery Commander was the first to start registration and had some shells landing on his own forward troops by mistake. So much bias existed against Indian officers that the Infantry Brigade Commander without verifying as to who had fired the shots rushed straight to Major Baghwan Singh furiously and asked him to stop firing on own troops. On being told that it was the British battery that had fired, the Brigade Commander allowed the incident to pass off lightly with a remark that it was very easy to make mistakes.[10] The bias was, however, to disappear soon.

As the two Battery Commanders waited after all important targets had been registered, enemy movement was observed in the British battle ery's zone. The accident in which some shells had landed on own troops had probably, shaken the British battery commander and on being asked by GOC 5 Division to open up on the enemy he expressed his inability to fire on the target because of its close proximity to own troops. This was the time when the J&K Battery could give a much

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10. Lt Col Bhagwan Singh pp 75-76

needed demonstration of its efficiency and the Battery Commander grabbed the opportunity by volunteering to fire into the other battery's zone while insuring the safety of own troops. He started shooting at a safe range first and then crept gradually on to the target. As the first group of shells fired for effect landed plumb in the middle of the enemy, the GOC, who was witnessing the shoot, appeared thrilled as he shouted", "well done and carry on". Thereafter volley after volley was sent down in the midst of the enemy while the ran helter skelter to disappear behind the hills. This fire of the battery created so good an impression on all concerned that all prejudices against the battery that may have existed vanished and here-after the Battery was much in demand everywhere.[11]

In order to take advantage of the J&K Battery's ability (as the only mountain battery in the formation) to come into action almost anywhere on the hills, and the accurate shooting that the Battery was capable of conducting, the Battery was moved further up while the battery commanders observation post was established in the forward battalion's (3/2nd Punjab) position quite close to the enemy positions. The battery was then given the task of a programmed shoot in support of an infantry attack. While the Battery Commander was in the middle of his order to the guns position, the telephone line snapped on account of heavy and incessant shelling on a road bend along which the line passed. L/NK Gabla Singh was detailed to mend the line, and this he did successfully after braving the deadly enemy fire in the vicinity of the tactically important road bend. For this act of gallantry and devotion to duty L/NK Gabla Singh (later Major) was awarded the Indian Distinguish Service Medal (IDSM).

After the attack had succeeded and own troops were preparing to advance on 30th March, the enemy suddenly counter attacked one of the coy positions. By then, in preparation for the advance, and the OP's

11. Ibid p 76

line to the gun position had been reeled up, but fortunately the Brigade telephone line was still laid. The battery commander got on to this line and ordered his guns to fire direct with open sights on the assaulting enemy that could be seen from the gun positions. The fire of the guns which could be seen by the whole force was murderous and the countery attack melted away as suddenly as it was launched. Once again the battery won the admiration of the infantry.

As the 5 Division advanced further and the enemy got a little out of range of the guns, the Battery was moved to another forward position which was within a few hundred yards of the main enemy defensive position at Ad Teclesan. Being in such great proximity of the enemy the battery observation post came under very heavy fire from enemy guns. Even while under enemy fire the Battery carried out some counter bombardment which proved so effective that soon the enemy guns got completely silenced. The pressure on the enemy, who in the beginning appeared to be set on giving a good fight at this last defensive position before Asmara, was so great that he lost heart after the brief but fierce initial encounter and the enemy commander at Ad-Teclesan surrendered on 31 April after declaring ~~Asmara an open city.~~ the city open. The main Italian forces, however, withdraw to Massawa hotly pursued by the Divisional motorised forces.

The Battery had again to stay behind as with its mules it could not have kept pace with the motorised units. This gave an opportunity to the men of the Battery to see the result of their counter bombardment of enemy gun positions at Ad Teclesan. One complete detachment lay dead near a gun, as if it had received a direct hit. There were also signs of shells having fallen very close to other guns. A lot of ammunition was lying in trenches close to the guns which the enemy gunners had not been able to use, probably because of the accurate

counter bombardment.

There was no need for the Battery to be called up for the next phase of the offensive.Massawa fell to own troops without much of fighting and hundreds of Italians gave themselves up to be taken prisoners of war. Congratulations for the victory at Cheren and Asmara started pouring in from all directions.Besides the troops (including the J&K Battery) receiving felecitations from their own formation Commanders, appreciations for their achievements were received from the British Prime Minister, C-in-C India and the C-in-C Middle East Forces. The Battery also received the personal appreciation of the GOC 5 Indian Division and his CRA. The CRA visited the Battery on the day of surrender at Ad Techesan and expressed his personal admiration for the work done by the Battery during the operations. He was particularly pleased with the way the enemy counter attack was repulsed by The Battery, putting the very first shell in the middle of the enemy. The GOC, Major General LM Heath CB, CIE, DSO, MC paid a visit to the Battery soon after the capture of Asmara and spoke to the State Officers and Indian Officers of the Battery with regard to their standard of efficiency and achievements during the operations in most flatering terms. As the greatest complement he admitted that there really was no need of an SSOwith a Battery of such high standard and promised to repeat this at General Headquarter (GHQ) India where he was going on posting. When he had finished Brigadier AQM Mayne, DSO, MC who was accompanying General Heath as the GOC 5 Division designate warmly congratulated the Battery Commander and remarked "You have filled yourself with glory."[12]

On his return to India shortly after the capture of Asmara, Lieut General (Since Promoted)LM Heath described the services of the Ist J&K Mountain Battery during the battle of Cheren and advance on Asmara in a broadcast from Delhi, as invaluable.[13]

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12. Jammu and Kashmir Information April 1944
13. Ibid

The Syrian Campaign:

After the fall of Asmara and occupation of the Italian Colony of Eritrea, the scene of fighting shifted to Abysinia and Syria. There was damand for the Mountain Battery in both the theaters. The Battery on the other hand was immobilised at Asmara due to a horse sickness, called Nigma, that had broken out among its animals. Almost all the animals had suffered (—) 15 horses and 71 mules dying within 12 days. Finally when the animals had recovered and the deficiency had been made up with captured Italian mules and horses, the Battery moved back to Tessinci and thence, travelling through Egypt and Palestine reached Syria where fighting between the British and the Vichy-French was in progress.

By the time the Battery reached the operational area the battle for Damuscus had started. Damuscus had, in fact, been captured but the enemy still occupied positions on the hills around it. The Battery was just in time to take part in the final attack on Jabal Mazar as part of the 6th British Infantry Division. The Division had already made some attacks from the south but without much success. An attack from the south-west by a brigade column was now planned and the J&K Battery was allotted to this brigade. The 16th British Infantry Brigade was to attack at night on a two battalion front and the J&K Battery was put under command of the left forward battalion namely the 2nd Battalion the King's Own Royal Regiment. The artillery was not to open fire till the capture of the first objective.

Soon after the attack went in on 10 July 1941, the situation started to go against the King's Regiment. The advance was held up as the two forward companies came under heavy and accurate enemy fire. As the Battery had made no time to make arrangements for firing at night, it could not come to the rescue of the companies till day-break. As soon as there was enough light on 11 July morning the Battery commenced shooting; picking up targets, such as concentration of tanks, MMG posts

and gun positions. The fire proved most effective and thwarted the enemys encircling moves against and the battalion that was held up just in front of enemy positions. However, the situation both with regards to the enemy as well as own troops was so confused that for the battery to be able to support the two forward companies more closely and effectively, it became necessary for an observation post to be established in the forward most company. Lieutenant Madan Lal who was given the task of establishing this observation post reached the forward ded company at great personal risk, having to crawl long distances over a fire-swept zone, and so directed the fire of the battery against the enemy as to enable the pinned down companies to resume their advance and capture their objectives. The courage, determination and ~~xix~~ initiative displayed by Madan Lal earned him the Military Cross (MC) and he became the first State Force Officer to receive such a high award[14].

While the Battery was so engaged the emeny located its gun positions as well as the wagon lines and both were subjected to heavy shelling. Luckily the gun positions were on a reverse slope where the enemy fire could not be so effective and the guns continued to fire without interruption but the waggon lines ~~that were not so well protected~~ came in for heavy punishement. It then became necessary to change the position of the wagon lines; an operation which was carried out by the mule drivers with the utmost ~~standiness~~ steadiness inspite of the great panic among the animals which the shelling had created. It was here that driver Devi Dayal earned his Indian Distinguished Service Medal (IDSM). While leading his mule through the shell swept area his right arm was severed by a shell sprinter. Inspite of this Devi Dayal led the mule safely to cover and held on to it till some one else could take it over from him.[15]

The enemy launched a series of counter attacks on the newly acquired positions of the King's Regiment, but all of them were broken

14. Ibid. As long as British officers remained attached to the State Force officers were never granted rank known
15. Ibid

up by the fire of the Mountain Battery directed from the forward and the main Observation posts.

Shortly after the battle of Jabal Mazar armistice was arranged with the Vicky French and all figghting in this sector came to an and around 12 July. The J&K Mountain Battery had adorned itself with fresh laurels during the battle of Jabal Mazar. This is absolute -ly clear from the rare compliment paid to the Battery by the General Officer Commanding the 6 British Division, Major General J F Evetts, C.B., C.B.E., DSO, MC in his letter to His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir dated 02 August 1941 reproduced below :-

"I have at present the honour of having the J&K Battery under my command and have received permission to write direct to you to express my admiration of its efficiency and keeness.

"The Battery came under my command a few days before my attack on Jabal Mazar, tenx miles west of Damascus. The attack took place on 10th and 11th of July and was one of the several operations which culminated in the final defeat of the Vicky Forces.

"Your battery was placed under the command of 16th Infantry Brigade commanded by Brigadier C E N Lomax, CBE, DSO, MC with the particular task of supporting the advance of the 2nd Battalion, the Kings Own Royal Regiment. Throughout the action the Battery worked with outstanding coolness. It never failed to give the closest support to the infantry who are full of praise of its conduct. The position of the mule lines was unfortunately seen by a hostile aircraft and the lines were severely shelled. I regret the battery lost two Other Rank killed, seven Other Ranks wounded and twenty mules from this cause. The action of the drivers durin this period was most praiseworthy.

"The guns which were not more than two hundred yards away were served with out a break throughout the bombardment.

Lt Col Bhagwan Singh OC 1st J&K Mtn Bty

Captain Madan Lal MC

Troops of the 1st Battery after cease fire at Jabal Mazar

"I would also mention the action of the forward observation party led by Lieut Madan Lal which inspite of every difficulty arising from the terrain provided continuous observation throughout the hours of day-light. I have recommended this officer for the Military Cross.

"I visited the Battery in its action stations on the day following the battle. I was most impressed by the smartness and soldierly bearing of all ranks although still surrounded by the debris of the battle. They set an example to the whole Division.* "It is unnecessary for me to state that a unit with such a standard must be commanded by an unusually good officer. Lt Col Bhagwan Singh besides being an exceptionally charming officer is, in my opinion, an excellent commander from whom one can expect the closest cooperation in the most trying circumstances.[16]"

The C-in-C Middle East conveyed his appreciation of the work done by the Battery to C-in-C India who in turn passed it on to the Maharaja through a telegraphic message which reads as follows:-

"Jammu and Kashmir Battery acquitted itself with great distinction in recent Damascus fighting. Divisional Commander commends highly its steadiness under enemy's artillery fire and accuracy its own fire supporting British Infantry."[17]

The Maharaja had on his part reasons to feel elated, especially as the Battery had earned distinction while being commanded independently by his State Commissioned Officer. On receipt of these complimentary messages he himself flashed out the following signal to the Battery:

"I am most proud of you and greatly value the fine example you set for your brother officers and men of all other units in the

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16. Ibid
17. Ibid
* Emphasis mine by the author

field. Well done. My best wishes for your further success in future." [18]

After staying in Damuscus for some time the Battery moved to Zhale 30 miles east of Dumuscus. Here the Battery performed peace time chores which came as an anti-climax to the exciting operational engagements of the last one year or so. The main occupation here was training which included a lecture/demonstration conducted by the Battery Commander for the benefit of the Commssioned and non-commissioned officers of a British Brigade. It must have been a unique experience in those days for an Indian officer (and a State Force officer at that) lecturing to an all British audience. The lecture demonstration went off so well that the requests were received from the other two brigades of the Division for arranging similar lecture/demonstration for them also. The requests could not however, be met as the Battery had soon to move out of the Syria". [19]

Training in Beach Landing:

While at Zhale the Battery received orders for move to Kabrit on the shores of the great Bitter Lake about 80 miles from Cairo. As there was to be no requirement for the mules in the new operational role assigned to the Battery, these were sent to Ed-Lajjun when the Battery moved to Kabrit. On its way to Kabrit the Battery had to pass through a Transit Camp in Palestine where all the Indian ranks invited the Battery officers and men to tea. In an epithetic address of welcome (interestingly, approved by their British Commanding Officer) presented to the Battery Commander, the Indians expressed their pride in the fact that a completely Indian unit, the only one of its kind in the army had acquitted itself so well in war. [20] This small incident has been narrated to give to the reader an idea of the feelings and sentiments of Indians in the army, who were in those days being denied

18. Ibid
19. Lt Col Bhagwan Singh pp 101-102
20. Ibid p 105

the right of being commanded by their own officers. The rare case of an Indian having the British Officers removed from his unit and then going on to successfully command it in war was not just a matter for the personal glorification of an individual. The Indian ranks in the theater treated it as a matter of national pride.

At Kabrit the Battery was put through a course in combined operations. The main thing practiced was the bringing of the guns in action from the Beach Landing Craft, in support of the infantry attempting a landing on enemy beaches. Mountain guns had never been used in this role before and the possibility of using this useful weapon during the likely landings in Socily and Italy was being explored. The Battery attained a high standard of efficiency within a very short period and it was found that the Mountain guns landing on the beaches along with the infantry could prove extremely useful in the initial stages of the landing. The problem, however, remained of moving the guns from one place to another without mules in conformity with the advance of the infantry. To overcome this handicap, pulling of guns with dragropes over the sand on the beaches was tried but it proved unsuccessful. Next the towing of guns behind tracked Bren Carriers and light tanks was tried but this too failed. Although the guns could be moved by this means, the sand raised by the tracks of these vehicles completely covered the guns, rendering them unfit for immediate use. The idea of employing the mountain gun during the impending landings was, therefore, finally dropped.

While the Battery was thus engaged in the Assault Beach Landing training, His Highness Maharaja Hari Singh GCSI, GCIE, GCVO, LLD paid a visit to the Battery on 09 October 1941 as part of his programme of visiting forces in the Middle East, sponsored by the Government of India. The visit was short and he remained with the Battery only till the evening of that day but was able to see the Battery doing the Assault Landing Craft drill. He visited the battery once again on 19 October and on this occasion inspite of the crowded programme in the Middle East he spent the

His Highness Maharaja Hari Singh and members of his staff with officers of 1st J+K mountain Battery.

L to R Capt Amar Nath (2IC) Colonel HN Haksar (Staff) Lieut Ahsan Ali, His Highness Lt Col Bhagwan Singh (OC) Lt Col Faqir Singh (Staff) Lieut Madan Lal

The Maharaja watching the men on training

His Highness Lieut General Maharaja Hari Singh GCSI, GCIE, GCVO, LLD reading out a message to Indian troops over the Egyptian Radio.

As member of the British War Cabinet Maharaja Hari Singh with the British Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill.

whole day with his troops, sharing their food and sleeping with them for the night under canvas. Before leaving the next day he awarded from his Privy Purse 15 days pay to all ranks of the Battery in appreciation of their work during operations.[21]

On his return to the State, the Maharaja was accorded a public reception at Srinagar. Replying to the address presented by the people, which alluded to the performance of the Battery, he said:-

"You will be glad to know that wherever I went and whichever officer of high military rank I met no one of them could say enough about the gallantry and the professional skill of the unit. So much so that in the sea plane yesterday there were no congratulations offered on the splendid service which our battery has done.[22]"

In recognition of the meritorious and conspicuous services rendered by Lieutenant Colonel Bhagwan Singh (since promoted out of turn) His Highness was pleased to grant an hereditary Jagir of Rs. 3600/- per annum in his favour. In his order dated 20 December 1941 announcing the conferment of the Jagir the Maharaja noted that "the Commander of the Battery under whose inspiring and exclusive leadership the Battery has won such distinction deserves credit and recognition for the service which have rendered the name of Jammu and Kashmir Army famous".[23] That the Jagir was confiscated by the first popular government in the State after independence is of course another matter.

In the meantime, back in the Middle East Command, the 26th Mountain Regiment of the Indian Army had been formed and the Ist J&K Mountain Battery was made part thereof. Consequently the Battery was moved back to El Lajjun in Palestine to join the newly raised regiment on 09 November 1941. It may be recalled that the Battery animals were already at El Lajjun.

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21. Jammu and Kashmir Information April 1944
22. Ibid
23. Ibid

The Struggle for Equality:

The Battery becoming part of the Indian Mountain Regiment created certain problems with regard to the command and control aspect. Within a few days of the Battery joining the Regiment, the Regimental Commander Lieut Colonel Alerdice was required to proceed on temporary duty and the question arose as to who was to officiate in his place. Being the next senior officer in the Regiment Lieut Colonel Bhagwan Singh of the J&K Battery staked his claim for being the next in command. The official British policy with regard to the status of the State Force officers, however, was that any such officer regardless of his rank, could be placed under the command of the junior-most King's Commissioned Officer. All the British officers being Kings Commissioned the implication of this policy in the present context was that a state Colonel could be placed under the command of a Lieutement let along some one just a rank junior. The official policy also deprived the State Force officers of the power to command troops other than their own. Based on this policy the Regimental Commander considered the claim of Colonel Bhagwan Singh to officiate in his place as untenable. Nevertheless on Colonel Bhagwan Singh insisting, he handed over the command of the Regiment to him, pending decision of the higher authorities on the case which he promised to take up with them. Colonel Bhagwan Singh had thus the honour of being the first State Force Officer to command an Indian army artillary regiment even if for ten days or so. Surprisingly no objection was raised by any of the British Officers commanding other batteries of the Regiment. The fact was that individually the British were people who always played fair while their government did not necessarily do so for reasons more political than moral or ethical.

On return from temporary duty the Regimental Commander brought a firm ruling of the headquarters stating that the existing policy be continued. The J&K Battery Commander refused to accept such a situation

on the plea that the existing policy had become redundant in view of the changed circumstances, under which the State Force officers were being employed. For one, with the removal of the British SSOs from the Battery, a State Force Officer was now its full fledged commander and could, therefore, claim equality in matters of command, and second, that precedence of a State Officer commanding troops other than his own had already been established when colonel Bhagwan Singh had, on various occasions during the operations, under his command not only personnel of the Indian Army but also British, Australian and South African Other Rank who were attached to the Battery from time to time. As a matter of fact the discriminatory provisions of the policy had already been some what waterd down after Army Headquarter in India issued instructions in 1939 that all Indian State Forces troops serving in the Middle East were to be considered as Indian Army for all purposes, and state force officers were to be viewed as Indian Army Commissioner Officers of the Regular Army when employed outside their States. Colonel Bhagwan Singh, therefore, had a strong case but his plea went unheaded and when the Regimental Commander proceeded once again on duty out of station, he handed over the command to the senior British Major present. Determined to resist a policy which was derogatory and humiliating for the State Force Officers Colonel Bhagwan Singh took the exteme step of refusing to consider himself under the command of a junior officer through a letter, with copies to all concerned, which reads as follows:-

"Considering that the Ist J&K Mtn Battery, Kashmir Artillery, forms a part of the 26 Mtn Regt I A, I think that the Regiment cannot function properly if officers and non commissioned officers of this Battery do not have powers of command over officers, non commissioned officers and Other Rank of the rest of the Regiment and vice versa.

"I have already made my position very clear in this respect in my letter No Cof/K/18 dated 02 Dec'41 and I consider that the

assuption of command of the Regiment by an officer holding the rank of a major is a great blow to my prestige as a Commanding Officer of one of the batteries of the Regiment, holding the rank of a Lieutenant Colonel.

"This has happened now for the second time in spite of difficulties having been realised and assurances having been given that such things will not happen in the Regiment.

"The GHQ India letter No. B/62518(2) (AG 8) dated 20 May 1941 cannot be rigidly applied in this case as it does not deal with the units of the Indian Forces forming part of units of the Indian Army; it only deals with units stationed at the same place.

"It appears that the intention is to follow this policy of putting the officers of the Indian State Forces under command of the Kings commissioned Officers irrespective of their ranks, inspite of ommission of these words from the official letter.

"Under the circumstances, when any officer holding a rank lower than that of mine, assumes command of the Regiment I would consider myself justified in not considering myself under his command.[24]"

This letter created quite a stir in higher circles. High ranking Officers visitied the Battery who while expressing their agreement with the Battery Commander's point of view explained the constitutional difficulties involved in the matter. They however, promised to try their best to have the policy modified which would of course take time they said.

At home Maharaja Hari Singh, known for being the champion of Indian dignity and self respect felt proud of the stand taken by one of his officers but was no less perturbed over the possible consequences of the extreme step that had been taken. He wrote a long personal letter to Colonel Bhagwan Singh the last paragraph of which summarised what he

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24. Lt Col Bhagwan Singh pp 126-127

had to say in the matter. This is reproduced below :-

"In laying stress on a point of principle you have done which every officer wearing the badges of my Army should do. You have shown self respect and you have proved yourself worthy of being an officer of my army. But in having talked as you appear to have done and written as frankly and pointedly as I see from the copy of your representation, you have already done your part. Having acquitted yourself so nobly you must not take the extreme steps. The threat towards the end of your representation is of a piece with the line you have consistantly maintained every since you went to Secundrabad. You know that your efforts have brought substantial gain to the officers and units of other states also and your manly conduct will not in the end prove unavailing, but you must not overlook the exigencies of war".[25]

The matter could not, however, precipitate then. Long before the present issue came up, the Maharaja had initiated a case for the recall of Colonel Bhagwan Singh to the State to command the J&K Arty Trg Centre. The order for his return to India was received on 29th December 1941 i.e. within a few days of the famous letter written my him, but he left the Battery after handing over to Captain Amar Nath Lakhapal (promoted A/Major wef the date of taking over) only on 15 January 1942. The problem had thus been solved for the time being but it continued to exercise the minds of the authorities concerned and a permanent solution to it was found in about 1943 when it was decided to supper impose Short Service Regular Indian Commission on the State Forces Officers while serving alongside Indian Army outside their states; as the SSOs were gradually removed from all State Forces units.

Back to the North West Frontier of India

The Battery stayed in Palestine till the end of March 1942, when it received orders for move back to India. It reached Karachi on 9 April

25. Ibid

and from here it moved to Kabul and thence to Peshawar where it arrived on 27 April.

In July the same year the Battery was ordered to Bannu for operations in Waziristan where a tribal uprising in the Upper Tochi Valley had resulted in the isolation and seige of the Fort of Datta Khel held by North Waziristan Scouts. At Bannu the Battery joined the 55th Infantry Brigade Column named GARCOL (Gardai Column) and with it marched to Gardia on the Bannu Razmak road on 19 July. During its march from Idak to Tal the Battery came into action four times in support of rear guards against minor opposition and at Tal camp helped in ~~support of rear guards against~~ dispersing tribal concentrations around the camp. The Column reached Gardai on 25 July where it was joined by the Razmak column and the 33rd Indian Infantry Brigade. The whole force then marched towards Datta Khel on 28 July. The Battery was allotted the task of putting down harrassing fire on tribal positions dominating the Lawargi Pass and thereafter supporting the advance, by observed fire, till the Force reached Mami Rogha on 29 July. On 31 July the Force advanced on Datta Khel meeting with some opposition which the Battery was able to quickly putdown.

Although the Datta Khel Fort had thus been relieved, the task of clearing the enemy from the Tochi valley road from Mirambah onwards still remained. The Force set about to accomplish this on 2 August; the J&K Battery supporting the picqueting of the line of advance by the Infantry. The Picquets were stablished by 7/1st Punjab Primarily with the support of the J&K Mountain Battery. On one of their picquets the Battery established its forward observation post and from here the Battery fire was directed on to several tribal concentrations on urgent requests from the various company commanders. The Battery fire was so effective that at the close of this day's action, the Force Commander, the Brigade Commander and the Commander Artillery congratulated the Battery Commander Major Amar Nath Lakhanpal and the forward observation

officer Captain Ishan Ali Khan for the accuracy of the fire and the effectiveness of the support afforded to the infantry which had saved many lives.

Further clearing up operations, (in all of which the Battery was given a role), followed till the roads from Miram Shah and Gardai had been opened and the tribesmen had submitted to the Government.

On 14 August the Force commenced its return march to Gardai, the Battery often coming into action in support of infantry picquets enroute. At Gardai the Force dispersed; the Battery accompanying 55 Brigade to Bannu and from there returning to Peshawar on 21 August.

Merger with the Indian Army

On 30 September the Battery moved out as part of the Chitral Relief Column escorting the annual reliefs to and from Chitral. This operation turned out to be the last operation of the Battery as a unit of the Jammu and Kasshmir State Force. For, on its return to Peshawar on 22 October 1942, it was transferred to the Indian Army, as the 30th (Jammu) Mountain Battery of the Royal Indian Artillery. Brigadier Ghansara Singh was detailed to explain to the officers and men the terms of transfer. The State Officers of the Battery were given the option of transferring themselves to the Indian army but they all elected to continue in the service of their Ruler. Most of the Indian Officers and other Ranks, however, had no option but accepted to join the Indian Army and went along with the Battery.

Thus came to an end the long and loyal service in the J&K State Force, of one of the Maharaja's most distinguished and efficient units. The unit raised in 1857 carried the Battle Honours Hunza Nagar 1891, Chitral 1895, Tirah 1897-98, Great War East Africa 1916-19, 3rd Afghan War East Persia 1919-20, World War II India 1939-40, Middle East 1940-42 and NWFP 1942 which may well be the envy of the finest unit of the Indian Army. The transfer was given retrospective effect from 01 October 1942.

2ND JAMMU AND KASHMIR RIFLES (BODY GUARD)[26]

The other State Force unit which had been placed at the disposal of the Crown Representative for employment in co-operation with His Majesty the King's Forces borne on the Indian establishment, was the 2nd J&K Rifles (Body Guard). Soon after the out break of the War when the Battalion was earmarked for such service outside the State, Special Service Officers (SSOs) joined the unit and it left the State in early September for some intensive training in British India. At the end of the training the Battalion was inspected by Major General F Gwatkin, DSO, MC, the Military Advisor-in-Chief Indian State Forces and it was well reported upon. The unit then returned to the State and remained in a state of preparedness for moving out at short notice, when required for operational duties.

Operations in Waziristan

The services of the Body Guard were finally requisitioned by the British in the middle of 1940 and the Battalion sped by a message from the Maharaja, read out by the Chief-of-the Military Staff Brig H L Scott at a special parade organised at Jammu cantt, moved to Wana in South Waziristan on 10 June. On arrival at Wana it formed part of the Wana Brigade and for some time carried out normal duties of a battalion located in the North West Frontier Province, infested with hostile tribals. The duties included flag marches, picqueting and actions in support of Political Officers. In between, when not employed on such jobs, it of course carried out training.

The first encounter with the tribesmen took place on 24 July when 100 of the hostiles engaged the Battalion's picquets as they were withdrawing after covering the advance of a column. Accurate fire from the picquets and the support that the Body Guards received from a section of mountain guns, finally induced the tribals to withdraw. The Battalion suffered no casualties but the tribesmen were believed to

26. Based on Historical Section Ministry of Defence file no 601/764S/H

have had some killed before they decided to call off. Thereafter several minor skirmishes between the hostiles and patrols and picquets of the Body Guards took place, while the Battalion performed its operational duties under the Wana Brigade right upto December 1940. The Battalion, however, suffered only one casualty in these brushes with the hostiles when sepoy Kanshi Ram was wounded by their sniper at Inzar Narsai on 5 September.

Besides the operational duties at Wana, the Battalion also took its share of work on the great defensive works prepared all along the North West Frontier of India as a precaution against a possible Russian attack. Russia, it may be remembered, joined the War on the side of the Allies only in 1941, when she was attacked by Germany, and till then she had kept her options open in such a way that an attack on India through Iran and Afghanistan could not have been ruled out. In order to meet such an eventuality a long line of strong defensive positions along the entire border with Afghanistan were constructed and communications to these positions were developed. The Body Guards helped in the construction of such defences at Wana.

Interestingly the Battalion had to shoulder a unique type of responsibility while it was at Wana. The Indian Army units in the area were either ones that had been newly raised or those that had been milked dry' due to the large scale expansion in the Army as a result of the war. The Body Guard being an old battalion unaffected by the "milking" was, therefore, expected to be the mentor and guide to other units practically in all matters and was much in demand everywhere. The responsibility was readily accepted and very soon the Battalion earned the nick name of a "Spot Battalion" in the Brigade.

At the end of December 1942 the 2nd J&K Rifles was moved to Siti Camp where it joined the Bannu Brigade. It did not, however, stay here for long and in March 1943 took over the defence of Bara Fort on the Khyber Pass under the Landikotal Brigade. Before this the Battalion had suffered its second casualty sometimes in Feburary 1943 when

sepoy Gaus Mohammad fell victim to a hostile snipper while on operational duty at Siti. After a five months spell at Fort Bara the Battalion was again on the move in November that year; this time to Shargai. There was yet another move within four months of its stay at Shargai and the Battalion arrived at Landikotal in March 1944. It was while the Battalion was at Landikotal that itx received the eagerly awaited orders for mobilisation for service overseas.

As Part of 'Pai' Force

The Battalion commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Khuda Baksh, embarked HMT SS Islami at Karachi and sailed for Basra on 19 August 1944. Although there were some old officers and men in the Battalion who had been to East Africa during World War I, for most of them it was their first experience of travel by sea and the voyage being not too long it was generally enjoyed by the troops. Basra was reached on 24 August and immediately the Battalion moved to Shiaba for a fortnight's acclimatisation and training; at the end of which it was inspected by Lieut General Sir Authur Smith KBE, CB, DSO, MC, the General Officer Commanding the Pai Force (Persia and Iraq Force).

The 'Pai' force had been created in 1942 to meet the Axis threat to West Asia. At that time the Axis thrusts towards the Caucassus had assumed significant proportions and the Nazi forces were expected to reach Arazes River in North Iran before long. The primary task of this force had been then to secure from land and air attacks the oil fields and the oil installations in Iraq and Persia (Iran). Its secondary task was to ensure the protection of the supply line from the Persian Gulf ports to Russia. Subsequently when the German threat to West Asia had receeded in view of their defeats in North Africa and Caucasia, the main role of the Pai force came to be the implementation of the 'Aid to Russia' schemes. The 2nd J&K Rifles was now to take its share of the remaining task of the 'Pai' Force. Soon after being inspected by the GOC, the Battalion was allotted the task of

protection of a sector of the Bandar Shahpur-Tehran- Bender Shah Railway which was being used for carrying munitions and stores for Russia as part of the "Aid Russia" scheme.

The Battalion arrived at Dorud (in Iran) on 14 September and took over the allotted sector of the Railway between Andimeskh to Keshmar (both places exclusive) with effect from 24 September 1944. The sector allotted to the battalion turned out to be the most difficult one. Throughout the length of the sector, the railway passed through a country intercepted by precipitous rocky hills and torrential streams, making the patrolling along the line arduous and hazardous. Besides, out of a total of 302 tunnels between Andimesh and Sultanabad, 101 were located in the Battalion sector alone. Some of these tunnels were over a mile in length. In most of the places the guard posts were located at the mouths of the tunnels, there being practically no space for the movement of the personnel of the posts except on the railway track itself. The worst, perhaps, was that for water several posts depended entirely on the River Ab-i-Diz which, with its course running through steep solid rocks, was not too easy to reach. The steps leading to the river bed, cut in the rock as they were, were steep and slippery and a slight imbalance or a slip would land a man in the churning waters of the Abd-i-Duz, never to be recovered or seen again- dead or alive. To give some idea of the danger involved, it may be mentioned that the Dogras whom the Body Guards relieved in this sector had lost nine other ranks in such accidents in their two months tenure while the Baluchies before them had lost twelve men in three months. The J&K Rifles were perhaps lucky in this regard to lose only three men in the two tenures totalling a stay of six months in the sector.

The sector was 67 miles long and was divided into four sub sectors named Masu, Telezung, Tangi Punge and Tangi Haftar. The entire sector was held with 39 posts. The main task of the troops holding these posts was to protect the railway line from saboteurs, and the goods being

transported from thieves. To the west of the Railway, the area was inhabited by the Lurs tribe while in the area to its east, lived the Bhakhtiaris. In appearance these tribals resembled pathans of the North West Frontier of India, but they did not possess the same war like spirit. Nevertheless they had proved to be a menace to the Allies. The Lurs had learnt the use of the explosives during the construction of the Railway and now with their sympathies having been won over by the German agents in Iran, they posed a constant threat of sabotage on the railway line, requiring maintenance of stricy vigilance by the troops that guarded it. What was even worst was that members of both these tribes were expert train looters; the art having been acquired more out of necessity than any love of adventure. They would board running trains, throw out bags of sugar, tea, rice etc, get down from them, and remove the loot to their villages before the dozing Russian guards on the trains realised what had happened. The J&K Rifles often had skirmish with the tribles when their patrols happened to be around at the time of the theft and helped the Russian guards in recovering the loot. In one such skirmish on 18 October, L/NK Jai Sugh's patrol helped in recovering ten bags of sugar. Cases where the stolen goods found their way to villages without being intercepted were dealt with by the local police and quite often our posts were called upon to assist the police in rounding up the thieves and in recovering such stores from their houses. These tribals were also expert camp breakers and rifle thieves, which required the troops to remain alert even while in camp. All these put a great mental and physical strain on the soldiers but the Body Guards took it all in their stride.

There was another aspect of these duties on the line of communication which made them different from the normal. What made the difference in this case was the fact that besides the British, there were also the Americans, Russians and Persians functioning on this line of communication (L of C). The Americans were responsible for

the running of the trains and their technical maintenance, the Russians for providing guards on the trains, and the Persians for the maintenance of railway stations and for providing labour, while the British were responsible only for the protection of the line against sabotage by holding posts all along the line and carrying out intensive petrolling between them. Any little incident would cause friction among the embassies of their countries at Tehran. The role was, therefore a delicate one, requiring understanding, tact, and co-operation, of the highest order. Fortunately the Battalion never gave cause for any friction and always acted with the required tact and co-operation.

On 16 November 1944 while the battalion was still on the railway protection duties, His Highness Mahraja Hari Singh paid a visit to the unit. The Maharaja stayed in the Battalion area till 22 November and during this time he made it convenient to visit all the companies at their their respective sub sectors. He was much pleased with the work being done by the Battalion and at the end of the visit awarded a bonus of one weeks pay to all ranks from his Privy Purse.

Having operated in its sector of responsibility for to months the Battalion was temporarily pulled out for training on 24 November; the charge of the sector having been taken over by 2nd Hyderabad Infantry. The Battalion then joined 24 Independent Infantry Brigade in December for intensive training that lasted till March next year. At the end of the training a special exercise, 'Mist', was set by the Brigade to test the J&K Battalion. The exercise involved operations against hostile tribes with the 2nd Sussex Regiment acting as the enemy, using live ammunition. The 2nd J&K Rifles with a squadron of the Jodhpur Lancers under command, performed extremely well during the exercise and at the end earned the appreciation of the Directing Staff.

After this four months training the Body Guard reverted to the railway protection duties on 28 March 1945 taking over the same sector

as before from the 2nd Hyderabad Infantry. The second tenure lasted right up to June 1945, when the responsibility for the protection of the Railway was handed over to the Persian Army and the Body Guard Battalion was concentrated at Dorud for move to Syria.

Peace Role in Syria

After the termination of the war in Syria, the Syrian nationalists found their opportunity to get even with their former masters and oppressors, the French. Consequently there had developed a situation in Damascus and surrounding area where the Syrian nationalists and the earstwhile colonists were going for each other's throats at the slightest provocation offered by one to the other. It was to perform yet another set of unusual duties, connected with maintaining peace between the two peoples, with least resort to force, that the 2nd J&K Rifles had been moved to Syria.

The Battalion arrived at the Austin Villa Camp at Jabalmazar on 31 July 1945 and took over the City of Damascus from the 1st Loyal Regiment on 4 August. The Battalion remained in Syria till the end of December 1945 and in the five months of its stay, generally performed the following tasks :-

(a) Internal Security duties in Damascus which was the main scene of rivalry between the Syrians and the French.

(b) Escorting French personnel and their families, who opted to leave Damascus for Beirut, Tripoli, Saida and Haifa; either for settling at those places or for proceeding further on to France.

(c) Escorting all movements of the French within Damascus city.

(d) Sending of periodical patrols to Quaitra, Dera, Soveida, Bekka Valley, Homs and Homa, for giving demonstration of British authority and impressing upon the people, the British determination to deal impartially but strictly with the disturbers of peace; be they Syrians or French.

(e) Maintenance of one company strength at Palmyra for protection of the French personnel there, and for maintaining law and order generally.

(f) Giving demonstrations to the Syrian Gendarmerie in Guard Mounting, firing of 3 inch Mortars, Physical Training displays and Drill.

It is quite obvious from the above that the job that the Battalion was asked to do was one that required even more tact and understanding than that required in the performance of their duties on the line of communication in Iran. Apparently the unit personnel were not lacking in any of these qualities and through their impartial conduct they were able to gain the friendship of the Syrians even as they earned the gratitude of the French. Its work was very much appreciated by British higher commanders. In fact it was the General Officer Commanding British troops in North Levents, Major General GA Pilleau, who, being pleased with the performance of the Battalion, had strongly recommanded to the C-in-C Middle East, the retention of 2nd J&K Rifles right upto the time that the British were required to keep their troops in Syria. Consequently the Battalion was allowed to leave Damascus not before 28 December when the last British troops pulled out of Syria. The Commanding Officer Lieut Colonel Khuda Baksh was awarded the OBE in recognition of the services so rendered; an award that was earlier reserved, practically, for British Officers only.

The Battalion reached Bombay on 25th of January 1946 and was visited by the Maharaja on the same day while it was still on board the ship. He congratulated Lieut Colonel Khuda Baksh and all ranks on the good work done by them while on active service overseas. The Battalion then left for Jammu and arrived at Satwari on 30 January to be received by Chief of the Army Staff, Brigadier H L Scott, at the railway station with the usual fan fare.

As a final tribute to the work done by the Body Guard during the period of the war, Major General Gwatkin, Military Advisor-in-Chief Indian State Forces sent the following message to the Battalion after

its return to the State:-

"The 2nd Jammu and Kashmir Rifles were the first Kashmir Battalion to go on service under the Crown and I personally was lucky enough to be the first formation Commander under whom they served. I quickly formed a high opinion of your work and from that day onwards you have never looked back. Your have earned golden resorts from xii all your formation commanders under whom you have served, whether on the North West Frontier or in Iran or in Syria and you have nobly maintained the high reputation of the Kashmir State Forces".

THE 4TH J&K INFANTRY (FATEH SHIVJI)[27]

The Fatch Shivji was warned for service under the Crown in early July 1940 and, sped by a message from His Highness the Maharaja, as usual on such occasions, it left for Thal in Kurram on the North West Frontier on 22 July. The Battalion was then commanded by Lieut Colonel Sukh Ram and was accompanied by the usual complement of the Special Service Officers (SSOs). At the beginning of the War, His Highness the Maharaja had presented the unit with an embroidered flag bearing the Battalion's arms on a yellow and red background. The unit carried a re dica of this flag with them to the frontier and on all subsequent campaigns.

Training and Frontier Duties

On reaching Thal the Fatch Shivji started a two month's work out of intensive training in Frontier Warfare and at the end moved to Dehra Dun for similar training under a more peaceful atmosphere. After completion of training at Dehra Dun, the Battalion returned to the Frontier in Waziristan on 20 December 1940 for a bit of on-the-job training, as part of the 4th Indian Brigade. Here it was assigned the task of protecting the road between the Sinki and Khajuri posts in the Bannu district. The role was successfully carried out without a

27. Based on Historical Section Ministery of Defence file No. 601/7648/ H and Ball of Fire by Antony Bret James, Gale and Polden Ltd Aldershot 1951. Defeat into Victory by Field Marshal W R Slim. Burma Campaign by Vamith Kumar, Kumar Publishers New Delhi 1966

mishap and the Ba-ttalion was once again sent back to Dehra Dun on 19 January 1941 for battalion and brigade collective training. The training at Dehra Dun had hardly been completed when there was another call for the Battalion from the North West Frontier and on 10 April 1941 it moved back to Waziristan, where the tribals had created much trouble for the Frontier Administration. When the Battalion arrived at Damdil the hostiles were holding the initiative and they had forced the Tochi Scouts to shut themselves up at their various posts. A number of these posts lay under siege of the hostiles and were cut off, both from each other, as well as from their headquarters. The 4th Battalion helped in the military operations launched in the Tochi Valley. During these operations it suffered two killed-L/Nk Mohammad Niwaz Khan on 7 May and Sepoy Sandhur Singh on 5 November. Sepoy Jodh Singh was awarded a Commendation card for gallantry.

After a stay of about 9 months at Damdil the Fateh Shivji moved to Jehlum in January 1942 and remained there for a month for a well earned rest. It was here that Lieut ~~Col~~ Colonel Narain Singh Rawat took over command of the Battalion from Lieut ~~Col~~ Colonel Sukh Ram, who now returned to the States. Then, on 2 February the Battalion moved to Noshera on its way to Landikotal, where it arrived on 29 March after a long and streamuous march. While at Landikotal the Battalion was engaged in the important task of improvement of defence at the Khyber Pass as also the approaches to it. The unit formed part of the Landikotal Column and acquitted itself with great distinction during the month and a half's stay at Landikotal.

We have seen how, ever since its arrival in British India the 4th J&K Infantry was being kept on the move all the time; not being allowed a stay of more than a few months at any one station. It is difficult to guess what the reason could have been for this. Probably it was due to the fast changing situation on the war front. Units from the Frontier (which was also being used as a training area) were perhaps being ordered to the front in quick succession and at short notice and others were moving in to take their place in the musical chairs fashion. Never-the-less this must have exercised a lot of mental and physical

strain on the units being moved around the way the 4th Battalion was. The Battalion personnel, however, bore it all with the fortitude so characteristic of the Dogras of Jammu. The next move from Landikotal to Peshawar in May was therfore taken by them as cheerfully as the other moves. Here the Battalion once again settled down to a longer spell of hard training in all types of warfare. While at Peshawar the Battalion also had also the honour of being visited by two dignitaries- the Nawab of Bhopal and the Duke of Gloucester.

After what turned out to be the longest stay at one place thus far, the Battalion left Peshawar for Fort Sandeman in March 1943, after being reorganised on Indian Infantry Battalion (mixed Transport) provisional War Establishment. While at Fort Sandeman it participated in the Zhob Brigade Columan exploits and gave a fine display of the high standard of training and efficiency which the Battalion had acquired over the past two and a half years or so; adding very much to its already high reputation. Later in October that year, the Battalion was on the move again; this time to Lorelai where it provided one Demonstration Company to the Staff College and a Demonstration Platoon for the Distt Battle School, both at Quetta.

Lieut Colonel N S Rawat relinguished command on January 7, 1944, and and was succeeded by Lt Col Narain Singh (Sambyal). Having been by now earmarked for operations in the eastern theatre, the Battalion moved under its new Commanding Officer to Raiwala for jungle warfare training, on 22 March. The four weeks training at Raiwala went off well except for a bomb accidenttxx in which sepoy bugler Raj Singh was killed on 15 April. Brigadier H L Scott paid a special visit to the Battalion on 17 April to convey to it the Maharaja's good wishes for its impending operations in Burma. A week later the Battalion moved to Namkum Camp in Ranchi for advanced jungle warfare training in final preparation for its induction into Burma.

~~The Burma Front~~

~~By the end of Jul~~

The Burma Front :

By the end of July 1944 the situation on India's eastern border had stabilised. The Japanese lightening advance into India had been halted and Imphal had been saved. The enemy had infact already been driven out from the plains in the north and east by the efforts of IV Corps. His retreat had been initiated and it now remained for the British to start the pursuit. This task was given to XXXIII Corps which had taken over charge of all operations in Central Burma with effect from 31 July 1944 after IV Corps was sent back to India for rest and reorganisation. At first it was decided not to start the pursuit till after the Monsoons that were at that time in full swing. However, when the 5th Indian Division was allotted to XXXIII Corps, Orders were issued for the relentless chase of the Japanese despite the monsoons. The directive given to XXXIII Corps was :-

(a) To pursue the enemy on :

(i) Imphal - Tiddim-Kalemyo-Kalewa Road;

(ii) Tamu-Kalewa Road; and

(iii) Tamu-Sitting Axis.

(b) To occupy Sitting and deny Chindwin to the enemy ships.

(c) On opportunity occurring, to seize Kalewa and be prepared to establish a bridge-head there.

The Corps in turn allotted to the 5th Indian Division, the task of driving the enemy back across the frontier and then forcing its way through the hills to Tiddim. There after it was to assault the mighty Kennedy Peak, capture Fort White and at the end of it all, to march down into the Kalemyo Valley.

The 9th Infantry Brigade of the 5th Indian Division led the advance upto mile 82 on the Imphal-Tiddim Road, after which the lead was taken over by 161 Brigade. When the 4th J&K Infantry joined the 5th Division, towards the end of September 1944, the Division was at mile 133. By then the Command of the Division, had devolved on Brigadier

DSW Warren; Major General Evans having been stricken with typhus and evacuated to the hospital. The Division was then just entering the last lap of its long and laborious march to Tiddim. The 4th J&K Infantry was allotted to the 9th Brigade which was at that time in a state of being reorganised. One of its battalions, the West Yorkshire which had been reduced to just two weak companies, was formed into one strong company and attached to the Royal West Kents of 161 Infantry Brigade to make up the fighting strength of the latter. The other battalion of the 9th Brigade 3/14 Punjab, was also in a bad shape and was preparing to return to India for rest and reorganisation. This battalion ~~xfxthm~~ was relieved by 4th J&K after it joined the Brigade on 9 October.

The advance along the remaining part of the march to Tiddim was as much of a trudge as it had been during the distance already covered. The Division had been stripped of all its heavy vehicles, but mercifully was still supported by six tanks. The going was extremely tough, as, besides the enemy opposition all the way, the surface of the road was reduced to ankle deep mud by the traffic and the rains, and most of the way it was a heart breaking climb for the infantrymen; loaded as they were with their full battle kit. With the limitations imposed by the state of the road, the advancing troops had to be maintained chiefly by air. Even then not more than a daily tonnage of 70 could be arranged for the Division. Strict economy had therefore to be exercised in the consuption of rations; the troops having to go on half rations very often.

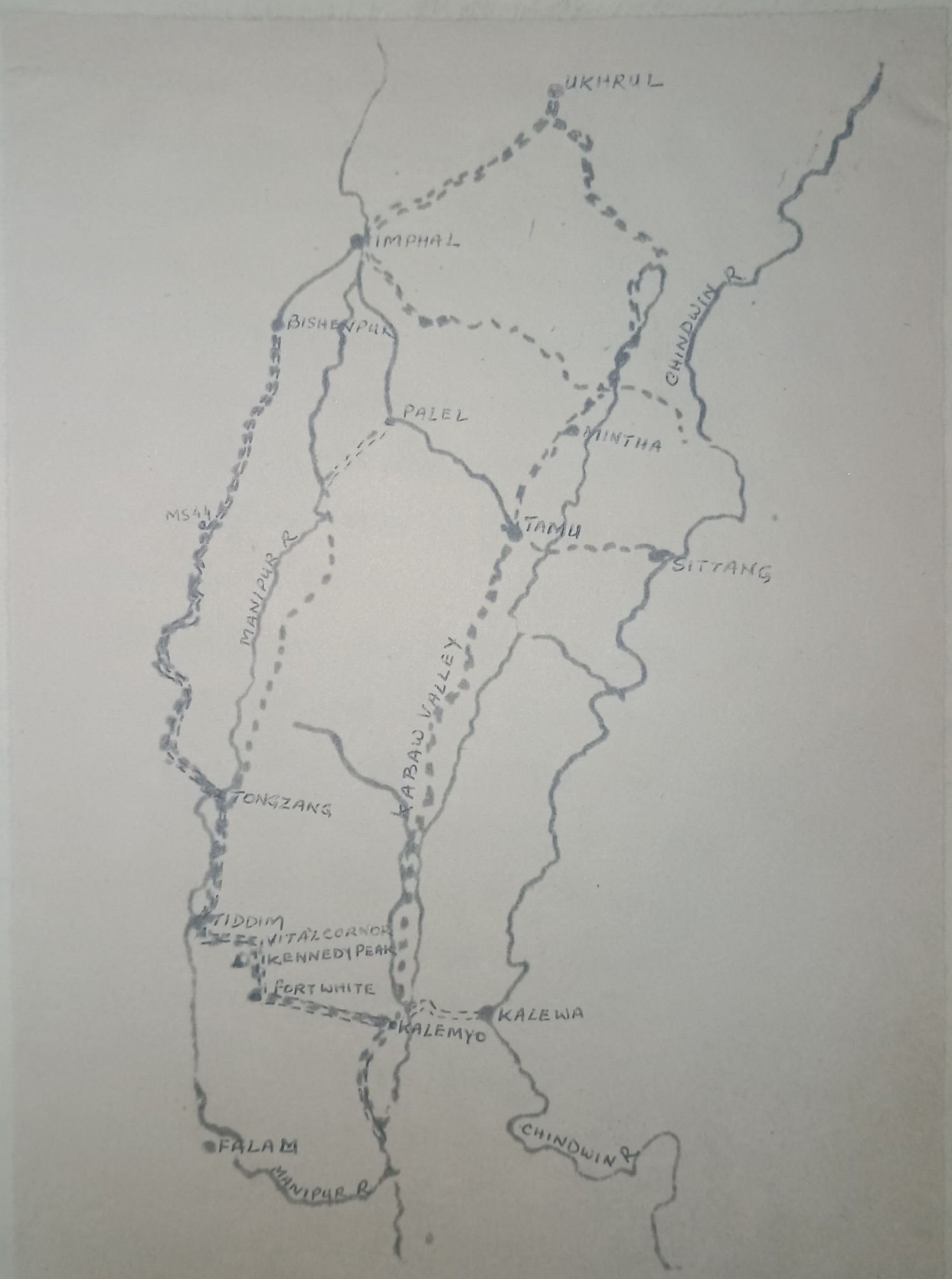
At long last Tiddim was reached and after some stubborn resistance by the Japandse on the approaches, the town fell to 1/17 Dogras of 123 Brigade on 17 October. After the collapse of the Japanese resistance at the approaches the Dogras encountered but little opposition and soon reached the 5th mile-stone beyond the town. Here the road swung sharply to the left and ran along a Ridge for 8 miles to

a road bend between Tiddim and Kennedy Peak which was termed as "Vital Corner". Thereafter the road turned south towards Fort white and Falam. The 8,871 feet high Kennedy Peak, which the long Ridge led up to, was strongly held by the Japanese and this now blocked the Division's advance to Kalemyo. Realising that no assault on the Kennedy Peak was possible except by way of the Ridge the Japanese had also taken pains to hold the Ridge in great strength. In face of this strong defence the 2nd/1st Punjab that had been marching down the eastern flank of the Division with Kennedy Peak as its objective had got held up and the 3rd/2nd Punjab, that had tried to work its way up the Ridge had not progressed any more than gaining some foot holds. There had to be a sense of urgency in the efforts of 15th Indian Division to capture Kennedy Peak, as Winter was approaching fast and the Division had to get to the Warm Kalemyo Valley before its onset. The 'vital corner', the capture of which would have not only thrown open the approach to Kennedy Peak but also cut the enemy's line of withdrawal, formed the Divisions first objective, while Kennedy Peak itself formed the second, and both there were now subjected to heavy bombardment.

The 4th J&K Infantry was assigned the task of capturing Kennedy Peak. With this end in view, on 26 October, Lieut Banaras Dev was ordered to lead a guerilla party from the Battalion, which was to work independently for seven days, and again information about the enemy dispositions in the Kennedy Peak area. Banaras Dev led his party with great skill and boldness and was able to obtain very useful information pertaining to the enemy. It was on the basis of information provided by this guerilla party that an enemy 75 mm gun was engaged by the Divisional Artillery and silenced for ever. Any attack on the Kennedy Peak, however had to wait for the Capture of 'Vital corner'.

'Vital Corner' was finally captured on 3 November when 3rd/2nd Punjabis were able to send one company to mile-stone 14, opposite the

THE TIDDIM ROAD

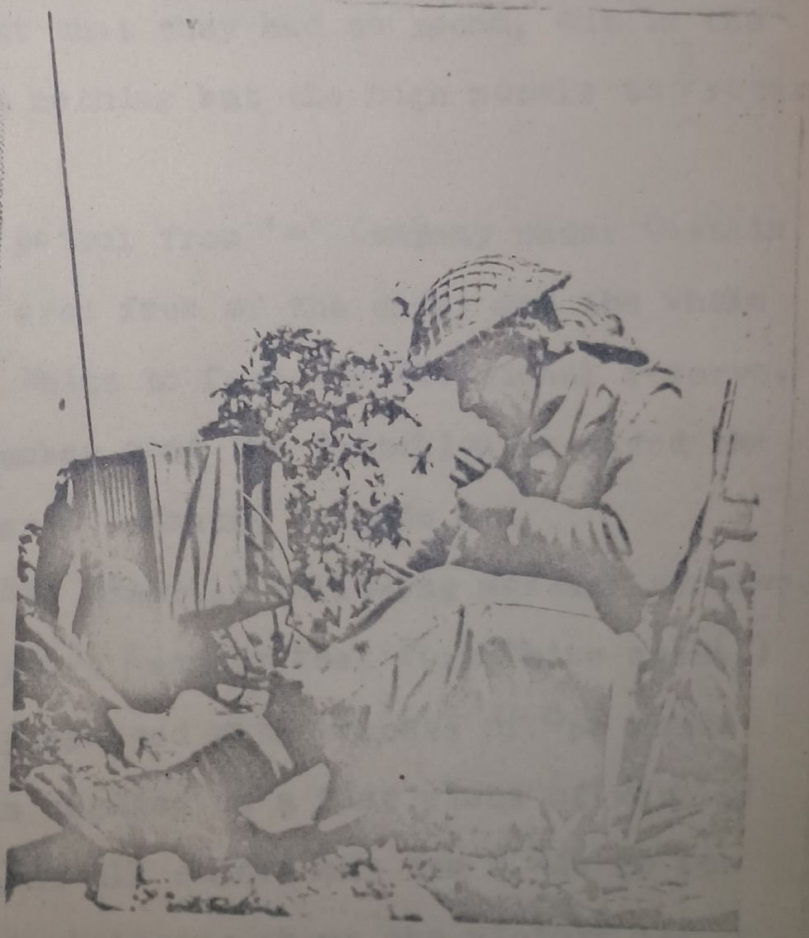


enemy holding the 'Vital Corner', up a route discovered through a brilliant piece of reconnaissance by a Subedar and one Sepoy of the Battalion. The company was able to surprise the enemy completely and after some fierce but unsuccessful counter attacks the enemy retreated from not only the 'Vital Corner' but also to a great extent from the Kennedy Peak which had now been made untenable. Nevertheless Kennedy Peak had to be cleared before the enemy could be pursued. Consequently on 4 November 'B' company of Fateh Shibji led by Captain Gandharab Singh Datta, with the 7th Battery of the 4th Field Regiment Royal Artillery in direct support, attacked and captured Kennedy Peak. The success was then exploited by 'D' Company under Captain Mohammad Aslam Khan, which moved with speed and caught up with the retreating enemy near a feature named 'Elephant'. Here the Japanese, about 60 strong, and supported by a few medium machine guns, had taken up a defensive position to cover the withdrawal of the others. 'D' Company tried to dislodge the enemy from its position through an encircling movement but the position was too strongly held by the enemy and Aslam Khan was forced to withdraw to a firm base. After another attempt by the Company had failed the Japanese attacked the Company's firm base in strength on 4/5 November night. The attack was beaten back with heavy losses inflicted on the enemy but it became quite evident that it was beyond the capacity of 'D' Company to dislodge the enemy from this position. The 'B' Company (under Captain Datta) was, therefore, brought into the attack and the 'Elephant' was captured on 5 November after some air strikes and intensive shelling of the position by the Divisional Artillery. 'C' Company under Captain Mohammad Din then passed through 'Elephant' and took over the chase of the retreating enemy. With a view to intercept Japanese withdrawing through side tracks a platoon from 'B' Company operated independently for three days from 5th to 8th November. The Platoon was able to kill three Japanese and wound another two during the period it remained out.

The enemy took up the next covering position on Point 8225,

Brig H L Scot reading out a message from the Maharaja to the officers and men of the 4th J&K Infantry on their departure for service under the crown

Lieut Banarasi Das MC



Maj G S Dutta on Kennedy Peak

leaving a screen of snippers to delay the advance. Captain Mohammad Din's Company which was leading the pursuit was able to penetrate the screen position and come to within 100 yards of the main position, but its advance was halted thereafter by heavy automatic and grenade fire. In fact the Company got so completely 'Pinned down' that it had to be extricated to a firm base under cover of tanks and other supporting weapons. At the firm base 'C' Company was joined by 'D' Company just in time to face the enemy counter attack on 6/7 November night, which the two companies together succeeded in repulsing. The final attack on point 8225 by 'C' and 'D' Companies supported by tanks and fighter aircraft was launched on 7 November and after some fighting the objective was captured by the Fateh Shivs. This was the first time that the Fateh Shivs had had to fight it out on the objective and the joy of the victory in the end was great. So much so that they did not feel the discomfort of the night that they had to spend, out in the open, on this high feature with nothing but the high morale to protect themselves against the cold.

On 8 November a fighting patrol from 'A' Company under Captain Dina Nath found the Fort White area free of the enemy and the whole Battalion concentrated at Fort White to form the Divisional reserve. It was at Fort White on 10 November that the Battalion received the following message from Commander 9 Infantry Brigade :-

"2236 (.) Personal from Bde Comdr(.) following message received from Div Comder after capture Kennedy Peak Fort White area(.) quote(.) Army Comder very pleased with success of Ops sends congratulations all tps engaged on a fine piece of work(.) unquote (.) I wish to thank all comdrs and tps 9 Bde gp for their loyal cooperation in bringing about the victory (.) all info.".

From 17th November to 2nd December the Battalion was assigned the role of mopping the enemy up the Myittha River valley south of

Kalemyo. The Battalion was based in the area of the village Tukkiyan from where it sent out long range patrols across the Myittha from time to time. A number of engagements were thus fought with the Japanese in which the Battalion invariably got the better of them. After the successful completion of this task, the Battalion was flown out of Kalemyo to Imphal with other units of the 9th Brigade for rest and re-equipping.

In its first bout with the Japanese which ended with the Battalion being flown out to Imphal, the Fateh Shivs had lost three men killed while accounting for some 25 Japanese killed and numerous among them wounded. The performance of the Battalion during this short action of less than a month would appear remarkable, considering the honours and awards earned by the Battalion. Captain Mohammad Aslam Khan, Lieut Banaras Dev and Jemadar Mohammad Niwaz Khan were awarded the Military Cross for gallantry of high order displayed by them, while Naik Rahmat Ali Khan was bestowed with the Indian Distinguished service Medal and many others including the Commanding Officer Lieut Colonel Narain Singh (Sambyal) and Major Adalat Khan were mentioned in Despatchers for their distinguished performance during action.

Admiral Lord Louis Mountbaten, Supreme Commander South East Asia command, inspected 9 Infantry Brigade Group on 17 December. As the Supremo Could not visit all the units individually, representatives of units, which he could not visit, were sent to the Brigade Headquarters for his inspection. Lord Mountbaten met the representative of 4 J&K Infantry and sent the following message to the Commanding Officer :-

"I was impressed by the representatives I saw of the 4th J&K Army and was glad to have such a good account of them from your General

Battalion was then inspected by General W J Slim in the later part of December and he greately praised the Battalion for its performance during the operations just concluded.

After about a month's stay at Imphal, the Battalion moved to

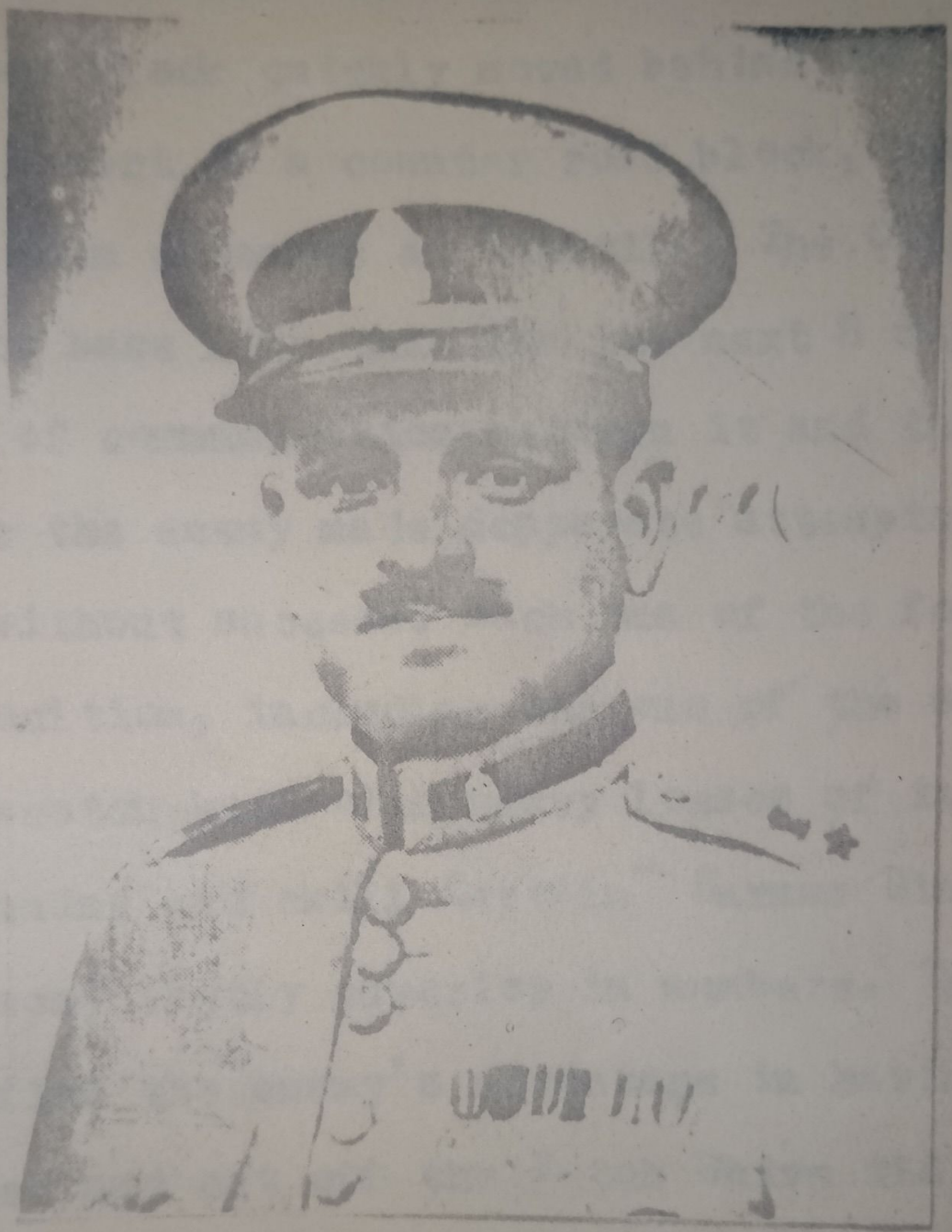
Jorhat on 4 January 1945 with the rest the Division for intensive training in the various operations of war, particularly opposed river crossing, in preparation for the second round with the Japanese. For the operations which were to begin in the spring of 1945, the 5th Indian Division was organised into a striking force, consisting of the 161 Brigade and 123 Brigade, and a holding force comprising of the 9th Infantry Brigade. For its role as the holding force the 9th Brigade, of which the 4th J&K formed part, was organised as an air borne brigade

While the 5th Indian Division was thus bracing up for another round of operations in Burma, the 17th Indian Division had through a brilliant move captured Meiktila on 4 March. Miktila was, however, strategically too important for the Japanese to be given up so easily. Besides, Meiktila air field being the centre of a group of air fields in the area, the town itself was a vital rail and road communication centre and with the large number of supply dumps located here, it formed the foward maintenance base for the 15th and 33rd Japanese armies. Capture of Meiktila by the British, therefore, meant the complete cutting off of the Japanese armies fighting around Mandalay from their main bases in the south. Consequently the Japanese had rested reacted strongly to the loss of Meiktila and in an attempt to recapture it, had diveted all formations earmarked for Mandalay to Meiktila; thus concentrating atleast a corps of two divisions against the 17th Indian Division. The British on the other hand were determined to hold on to the treatest advantage they had gained through the capture of Meiktiala. In order to reinforce 17 Division, 9 Infantry Brigade, which, as we have seen, had already been organised as an air borne brigade, was ordered to fly into Meiktila immediately.

As part of the 9th Brigade, the 4th Battalion left Jorhat for Palel by road on 12 March 1945 and was flown to Meiktila on 16 March by batches. The first batch consisting of three rifle companies and including the Commanding Officer's party could not, however, land at

Meiktila due to intensive shelling of the airfield by the Japanese and had to be diverted to Michi. From Michi Colonel Narain Singh somehow managed to fly back to Meiktila in time to received the second batch consisting of one company under Captain Harnam Singh, which had managed to land at Meiktila inspite of enemy shelling. The Brigade Headquarters had also managed to land at Meiktila amidst shell burst. Unfortunately one of the Dakotas carrying Brigade Headquarters personnel received a direct hit after it had landed resulting in the death of Lieut Mansa Khan and one other rank of 4th J&K, (attached to the Brigade Headquarter) who were among the passengers of the aircraft, still in the process of disembarking.

Soon after landing Captain Harnam Singh's company was attached to a battalion of the Punjab Regiment. The first task given to the Company was the protection of an aircraft that had forced-landed in a nearby field and could not be towed to safety due to some mechanical defect, developed as a result of the forced landing. The Company sent out a platoon under Jemadar Gopal Singh for this job and the platoon reached the aircfaft just in time to save it from enemy patrols that too were trying to get to it. In the performance of this duty two of the three section commanders of the platoon were wounded. On about the 20th of March, Captain Harnam Singh was sent on an independent mission with his company to establish a road block at mile stone 342 on road Rangoon-Mandwin. The Company had hardly covered a distance of one mile from the airstrip when it came under heavy enemy artillery fire. The advance was, however, continued- the men moving at the double during the time between the bursting of shells of one salvo and the second sound of firing of the other. Only one casualty in wounded was suffered due to the shelling which lasted about ten minutes. In a spirit of exemplary comradeship, L/NK Nag Singh carried the casualty during enemy shelling for about 200 yards to safety. The Company finally reached its destination by noon that day and immediately occupied a defended locality on the Kyigaing bridge.



Lt Col Narain Singh OC 4th J&K Infantry

Hardly had the positionk been occupied when the enemy, realising thedanger posed by the road block, quickly moved behind the company locality and established a sort of a counter road block, thuex cutting off 'B' Company from the main defences at Meiktila. The Company remained cut off from its base like this for the next 8 days; wireless remaining the only means of communication between it and the Brigade Headquarters. Thereafter the enemy made desperate attempts to dislodge the Dogras but without success. Each one of the four attacks he made on the Company position, including the one supported by three 'tankettes', was beaten back with heavy losses inflicted on the enemy. Through cunning and skill Captain Harnam Singh was able to hold out against an enemy vastly superior in numbers. The skillful use of the M9AI had nullified the enemy's advantage in having 'tankettes'.

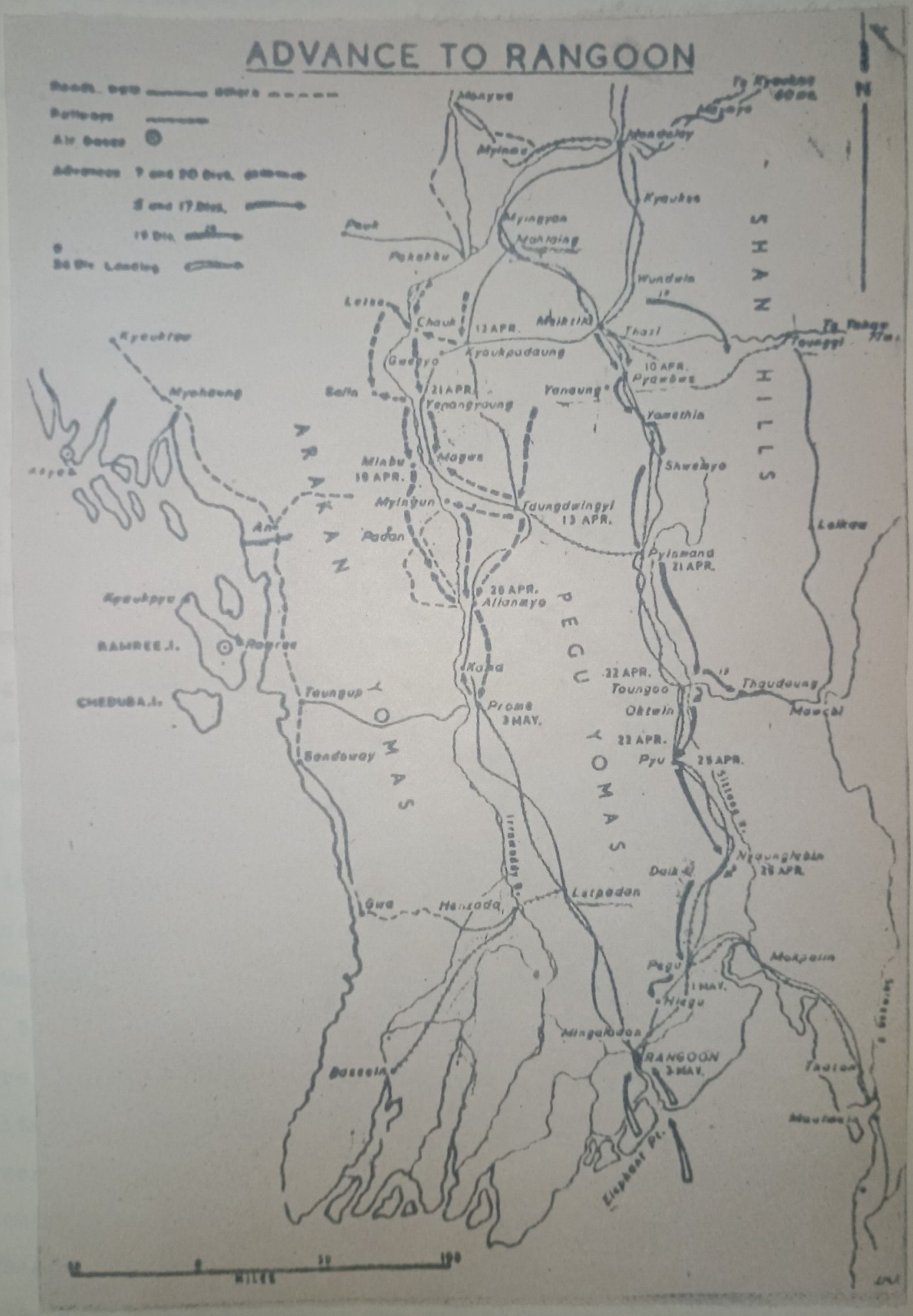
Even when surrounded and cut off the Fateh Shivs did not give up their offensive posture. Aggressive patrolling was carried out by the Company throughout the period of the seige to induce caution among the Japanese as also to prevent them from taking too close a look at the defences. One such patrol from the Company under NK Bhagat Singh ambushed a Japanese party escorting two bullock carts loaded with rice, 'gur' and biscuits on March 25. Two of the escort were killed while the others escaped leaving the bullock carts behind. The patrol drove the carts loaded with rations to the company locality and thus helped in easing the ration situation which had begun to become acute. The patrol had also brought with them the two Japanese rifles and a tommy guns captured during the ambush.

Eight days after the company got cut off, the Brigade attempt to reestablish contact with the Company by road succeeded when a company of another battalion supported by tanks was able to clear the enemy from his road block and the J&K Company was withdrawn to Meiktila. For the courage, exemplary coolness, resourcefulness and dedication displayed during this action, captain Harnam Singh was awarded the Military Cross.

Immediately on arrival at Meiktila, 9 Infantry Brigade had been deployed to hold a number of defended 'Boxes' at places of tactical importance to secure the town against Japanese counter attacks while 17 Division was made free to go on to the offensive and drive the enemy away from Meiktila. The principle of offensive action in defence was not lost sight of by 9 Brigade and sallies by strong infantry and tank columns were often organised from the defended 'Boxes'. There was therefore constant fighting by the troops of the Brigade, either defending their localities against enemy attacks or sallying out of the defences to hit out at his concentrations. The 4th J&K Infantry had also been allotted one such defended sector after its three rifle companies, which had had to land at Michi, had been flown back to Meiktila. On the night of 22/23 March the Japanese attacked the forward most defended locality of the Battalion, covering the southern approach to Meiktila and held by 'C' Company under Captain Hassan Khan. As the Japanese advanced towards the 7th and 8th Platoons, which occupied two important features, the platoons stood to, passed back information but held fire as the enemy was outside their effective range. All efforts of the enemy to provoke and demoralise our men by shouting slogans in urdu failed and they held their fire right till the enemy closed up to the barbed wire and prepared to assault the 7th Platoon. The 8th Platoon then opened up devasting fire from the flank in support of the 7th and when the 8th was attacked the 7th Platoon opened up with an equally ravaging flanking fire; both taking a heavy toll of the enemy as he attacked wave after wave. So determined were the Japanese in their assault that despite the casualties they continued to move forward and some five of them even succeeded in actually entering the defences. The five were, however, quickly finished off in a hand to hand fight. Fighting continued the whole night and at dawn the enemy withdrew leaving behind 267 dead in front of both the platoons. As against this the company suffered two killed and four wounded. Both the killed, Sepoy Ilam Din and Lance Naik Hakim Din, had displayed gallantry and

courage of a high order. Ilam Din was a 2 inch mortar number but when his section post ran out of ammunition he volunteered to go back and get some, even though this required him to pass through an area swept by enemy fire. While in this process, Ilam Din noticed some Japanese trying to cut through the wire defences. He charged at them with grenades killing two and driving away the rest before he was shot by one of them. In the morning he was found dead with his right hand still clutching a grenade. Hakim Din, also of the 8th platoon was in command of the light machine gun post of his section. When both the gun numbers got ~~killed~~ wounded during the Japanese attack he took over the gun and fired it with deadly effect. After he ran out of ammunition he defended his gun by lobbing hand grenades at the Japanese party that had closed up to it. In the process he was killed by a grenade lobbed at him by the Japanese. On receiving news of the bravery of Ilam Din and Hakim Din, the Maharaja awarded Rs.200/- to the next of kin of each. ~~the Military Cross for his gallant leadership~~ Captain Hassan Khan was awarded the Military Cross for his gallant leadership due to which the men of his Company had stuck on so stubbornly to the positions against such determined Japanese assaults.

The 17th Indian Division was finnally able to drive the Japanese away from their positions around Meiktila by about the 30th of March, when the whole area to the north and west had been cleared of the enemy. The stage had thus been set for the 5th Indian Division to advance from Myngyan and take over the pursuit. 9 Brigade, and with it 4 J&K Infantry joined the Division on 20 April at Thtkan and led the advance thereafter. Supported by Sherman tanks and a battery of the 4th Mountain Regiment, the leading elements of the Brigade entered Pyinmana on 25 April without encountering much resistance. 161 Brigade then passed through and took over the lead while 123 Brigade worked to the flank and captured Lewe strip. Thereafter the Division advanced very rapidly towards Rangoon along with the 17th Division; each leading the advance by turns. It was, however, deprived of the honour of capturing Rangoon which fell to the British sea borne forces on 2 May while the leading elements of the 5th Division were just 36 miles away by road.


ADVANCE TO RANGOON
Monywa
Myinmu
Mandalay
Kyaukse
Myingyan
Mahlaing
Pauk
Pakokku
Wundwin
Letse
Chauk
13 APR.
Meiktila
Thazi
Kyaukpadaung
Gwegyo
10 APR.
Pyawbwe
Salin
21 APR.
Yenangyaung
Yanaung
Yamethin
Kyauktaw
Myohaung
Minbu
19 APR.
Magwe
Shwemyo
Myingun
Taungdwingyi
13 APR.
Padan
Pyinmana
21 APR.
Leikaw
Kyaukpyu
RAMREE I.
Ramree
CHEDUBA I.
Taungup
Kama
Prome
3 MAY.
22 APR.
Toungoo
Thaudaung
Oktwin
Mawchi
22 APR.
Pyu
25 APR.
Sandoway
Irrawaddy R.
Daik
Nyaunglebin
25 APR.
Gwa
Henzada
Letpadan
Pegu
1 MAY.
Hlegu
Mingaladon
RANGOON
3 MAY.
Bassein
Elephant Pt.
SHAN HILLS
ARAKAN YOMAS
PEGU YOMAS
MILES

The 4th J&K was at that time at Pegu to which place it had been flown on 1st May for operating in the Pegu Yomas against the Japanese retreating in a disorganised manner from the direction of Prome under pressure of the 20th Indian Division.

The contribution of the Fateh Shivs in the speedy advance of the Division was by no means little. The Battalion patrols had fought numerous sharp actions with the enemy rear guards and helped in the brushing aside of enemy opposition on a number of occasions. A notable action was fought by a patrol from 'B' Company after under Jemadar Gopal Singh on 17 April at Ywathit, where it encountered about 30 Japanese who were blocking the main approach to the village. Jemadar Gopal Singh led a blitz type attack on the enemy post killing 14 of the enemy at the cost of sepoys Mangat Ram and Bachitru killed and two others wounded. The next day one Japanese was taken prisoner (a very rare thing indeed) by a patrol under Lieut Khali Ram.

Some more actions were fought by Battalion patrols while operating in the Pegu Yomas after the fall of Rangoon. Notable among these was the one fought on 3rd May by a platoon strong patrol from 'A' Company under Jemadar Dharam Singh. That day Jemadar Dharam Singh observed a party of some 25 Japanese in the vicinity of Waw on the west bank of the Sittang River. The immediate reaction of Dharam Singh was to try and encircle the enemy without being noticed, but just as the platoon was stealthily closing in, another large party of the Japanese was seen to join the first one, making the combined strength of the enemy more than what Dharam Singh could have tackled with his platoon. So he halted the process of encirclement and while he kept the enemy under observation, he sent a message to his company headquarters for reinforcements. Within half an hour another platoon from the company joined Dharam Singh's platoon and the two together stormed the enemy. 26 Japanese were counted dead at the end of the assault while one enemy Medium Machine Gun (MMG) was captured intact. On own side one Sepoy

Romal Singh was killed and another wounded. Romal Singh's death was very sad, as it was he, who, as the leading scout, had located the Japanese party amidst a bamboo thicket and thus saved his platoon from being ambushed. It was also he who, having located the enemy Medium Machine Gun, had successfully stalked it to kill its gunner. He was mortally wounded when he tried to push further on to another target all by himself. In a message to the Commanding Officer of the Battalion, His Highness the Maharaja congratulated the Battalion on the conduct of all those engaged in the action on 3rd May. He particularly appreciated the courage of sepoy Romal Singh and the dash and initiative of the platoon commanders.

Later a patrol under Jemadar Sant Ram chased 5 Japanese for two miles and killed all of them. So as to leave no doubt in any ones mind as to the number of the enemy killed, Jemadar Sant Ram brought back the five dead bodies to the company in a bullock cart that the patrol had captured from the Japanese.

At the end of May 1945, the 4th Battalion moved back to Magwe and came under the Command of 505 District. Here it was employed on road protection duties with detachments at Pakokku, Chauk, Yenenyuang, Allenmyo and Thayetmyo. At times strong mobile columns were pushed out to intercept stray parties of Japanese that were still lurking around and also to curb the activities of decoits who were taking advantage of the unsettled conditions prevailing in the country. Extensive flag marches were under-taken in the districts of Thayetmyo and Allenmyo where activities of the Burma National Army men had become a source of constant danger to the peace and tranquility of the area. A number of them were rounded up and large quantities of war material was recovered from local inhabitants by mobile columns of the Battalion operating in these districts.

On 15 September, 1945 the Battalion received orders for return to the State after about five years of service under the Crown. A

warm send off was given to the Battalion by the General Officer Commanding (GOC) 505 District and his staff. In his speech the GOC Major General AHJ Snelling thanked Lieut Colonel Narain Singh for the magnificent work done by him and his Battalion, while serving under 505 District and for the excellent results that the Battalion had achieved during this period. He wished the Battalion good fortune and even greater truimphs in the future. The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, the 12th Army, also sent a message to the Battalion on its departure, in which he thanked all ranks for the notable part they had played in the final defeat of the Japanese.

The unit left Wagwe on 30 September and arrived at Jammu on 15 October to be received at the Railway Station by Maharaja Hari Singh himself and the staff of J&K Army Headquarters. His Highness was happy to see his Battalion back in the State and naturally proud of the distinguished service that it had rendered. In his message to the Battalion on its arrival the Maharaja said, "You have brought glory not only upon yourself but also to your Ruler and your beloved State". Then amidst shouts of "Maharaja Bahadur ki Jai" he announced the award of 15 days pay as bonus to all ranks from his Privy Purse.

Glory upon themselves and the State, the Fateh Shiv had indeed brought, and this was evident from its impressive tally of honours and awards. Besides the award of the OBE to the Commanding Officer Lieut Colonel Narain Singh and MBE to the 2nd-in-Command Major Adalat Khan, the Battalion earned five MC, One OBI (First Class) one OBI (2nd Class) nine Military Medals, one IDSM, twenty Mentions in Despatches and one certificate of gallantry. ~~Which could be a matter of pride for the most seasoned battalion of the Indian Army.~~ Not many even among the most seasoned battalions of the Indian Army could perhaps boast of a better score in a single campaign.

2ND J&K MOUNTAIN BATTERY

We have seen how at the outbreak of the war in September 1939, the Maharaja had ~~at once~~ placed all the military resources of the State ~~and the State Forces~~ at the disposal of the King Emperor. In particular he had

made an immediate offer of the services of one Mountain Battery and two infantry battalions. We have also seen how all the three units of the J&K State Force distingdished themselves while on active services. In November 1940 services of the 2nd J&K Mountain Battery were also requisitioned by the British Indian Government and the unit under the command of Major Ali Ahmed Shah moved out of the State on 15 November that year to Landikotal in the North West Frontier Province of India. Here it was re-equipped with the 3.7" Howitzers and trained accordingly In early 1941 the Battery moved to Ichherian Camp, about 40 miles from Abbottabad, and after a few months stay here it was finally moved to Kakul to join the 7th Indian Division for collective training. While at Kakul Major Murrawat Khan took over as the Battery Commander from Major Ali Ahmed Shah who returned to the State. The Battery remained in the Kakul- Mansera area till May 1942 when it received orders for move to the Burma front, where it was to form part of troops engaged in covering the withdrawal of the 17th Indian Division across the Chindwin into India. For this the Battery with all its animals first moved to Chillagong and thence to Dimapur by train. From there it was moved by road to Palel via Kohima and Imphal. At Phalel where the covering troops for 17 Division were located the Battery came in action a number of times to help stragglers in disengaging themselves from their pursuers. After a few months at Palel the Battery moved back to Chillagong in September 1942.[28]

On Ist October 1942, the 2nd J&K Mountain Battery was also transferred to the Indian Army to become the 31st (Jammu) Mountain Battery of the Royal Indian Artillery. The terms and conditions of transfer were the same as that for the Ist Battery and Brigadier Chansard Singh explained these to the men and the officers at Chillagong before the transfer. As in the case of the Ist Battery, none of the officers of the 2nd Battery opted for transfer to the Indian Army[28]=

28. Interview Lt Col G S Dutta who as a Capt in was the second-in-Command of the Battery under Major Murraw t Khan.

NEW RAISINGS

The 8th and 9th Infantry Battalions

To replace the two infantry battalions detailed for service outside the State, another two battalions- the 8th and the 9th were raised. The 8th J&K Infantry consisting of 100% Rajput Dogras was raised, at Jammu on 10th February 1940, under the Command of Lieut Colonel Jaswant Singh (Jaswal), as an Indian State Force unit on half battalion basis. Consequently it was initially organised into a battalion headquarters, headquarters company and three rifle companies. It was subsequently reorganised on full battalion basis. It was allotted a primrose facing/ khaki uniform. The 9th Battalion was raisdd a month later on 13 March 1940 under the command of Lieut Col Dhanantar Singh. This Battalion was also initially organised on a three rifle company basis and later reorganised as a full battalion, on requisite manpower being gradually made available. Its class composition was also similar to that of the 8th Battalion i.e. 100% Rajput Dogras. The uniform was again khaki with navy blue facing. Subedar Majors Tripat Singh Sambyal and Ganga Singh had the honour of being appointed the first Subedar Majors of the 8th and 9th respectively.[29]

Wireless Section

A wireless section with mixed class composition was also raised soon after the outbreak of war. This wireless section is not to be mixed up with the Brigade Signal Section that was raised in May 1942 under Captain Sher Jang and placed at the disposal of the Government of India for service in cooperation with His Majesty's land forces.[30]

Maharaja's Guards

To assist the civil authority in maintaining law and order in the State in times of emergency a body of men, consisting mostly of exservice-men and known as the Majaraja's Guards, was enlisted during the period.[31]

RECRUITMENT

The Other Rank

To meet the requirements of the newly raised units and reinforcements for units on active service, the Artillery Training Centre and the Infantry Training Battalion, were greatly expanded. No

29. J&K Administrative Report 1939-40 and J&K Army List 1940
30. J&K Administrative Report 1941-43
31. J&K Administrative Report 1939-40

difficulty was, however, faced in meeting the requirement of recruits. So many recruits came forward for enlistment in the State Force that it was even possible to insist on recruits with higher physical standards than ever before. Inducement for recruitment was, however, kept up and the bonus for every recruit accepted was raised from Rs. 2/- to Rs. 6/- in 1944-45. A special effort was made by the army to attract State subject Sikhs to colours and this met with fair amount of success. Facilities were also provided to the Indian Army recruiting agencies to raise recruits from State Subjects. Thakur Lachman Singh Charak was appointed an Assistant Technical Recruiting Officer with an honorary rank of a Captain, to assist the British Indian recruiting authorities in the enrolment of technicians, and centres for recruitment to the Indian Army were opened at various places. The Dogra Rajputs perhaps shouldered the greatest burden of recruitment. Apart from meeting the great demand that there was for them in the State Force, the demand for this community in the Indian Army, was also fully met. The next in demand was the Dogra Muslims especially so in the Indian Army.[32]

State Officers

To meet the officer requirement of the State Force, 40 selected Indian Officers (Junior Commissioned Officers) and Non Commissioned Officers (NCOs) were promoted to the rank of 2nd Lieutenants as Emergency Commissioned Officers. Special training courses, in addition to those run for Regular Commissioned Officers, were conducted for these officers at the J&K Training School to enable them to join their units without much loss of time. It is of interest to note that applications were also invited from civilian gazetted officers of the State for conversion to army service as commissioned officers but the offer met with no response. Some of the Emergency Commissioned officers

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32. J&K Administrative Report 1939-40 and 1940-41

Officers Cadets Army Training School 1947

Sukhdev Singh Shanker Singh Harbir Singh Banerjee Sree

Jagrup Chand Ram Singh Mohan Singh Pathania Syed Kishan Singh Sehgal

Dewan Singh Harnam Singh Mahal Singh Sunit Singh Pathania Mumtaz Prabhat Singh Harbans Singh

7th Sikh Infantry Sports Champions 1941

were sent for training at the Officers Training Schools (OTS) in India. The intake of cadets for regular commission, some of whom were trained at IMA Dehradun, was also greatly increased. Some retired officers who were considered still fit for static duties were also recalled to service to meet the immediate requirement of officers. Infact Colonels Jaswant Singh and Dhananter Singh who raised the 8th and the 6th Battalions respectively were two such retired officers recalled to duty.[33]

THE 7TH J&K INFANTRY[34]

In view of the serious developments in the war situation during the second half of 1941 and of the earnest desire of the Maharaja to do all that he and his government could to help the British Government in its hour of crisis, the Maharaja offered the services of one more infantry battalion to the Viceroy. The offer was gratefully accepted and the 7th J&K Infantry left the State on 10 June 1941 under the command of Lieut Colonel Chattar Singh and with the usual number of SSOs attached to it. The Battalion reached Havelian by train on the 11th and the same day marched to Abbottabad. At Abbotabad the unit was received by a hailstorm, but the hospitality of a Gorkha Battalion at the location saved the men from the prospect of an uncomfortable night. Early next morning the Battalion marched down to Bakarial camp, arriving there on 13 June. Here the Battalion relieved the 6th Battalion of the 12th Frontier Force Regiment and took its place under the 14th Infantry Brigade. The Battalion was then put through intensive training in mountain warfare. The training culminated in an exercise entailing an attack on a supply dump in which the Green Howards acted as the enemy and the Battalion earned high praise of the Army Commander who witnessed the exercise. Later, in

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33. Ibid
34. Based on draft history of J&K Rifles produced by the Regimental Centre 1966, J&K Information April 1941 and private diary of Brigadier Chattar Singh.

early September 1941, the Battalion Signal Platoon was classified by an Officer of the Green Howards, under orders of Headquarters 7 Indian Infantry Division, and received the congratulations of the General Officer Commanding for the excellent results achieved. The Battalion was now fit for operational duties.

About this time considerable trouble was being caused by the tribesmen of Waziristan under the leadership of the Faqir of Ipi and a large number of Indian Army troops was tied down here for dealing with the disturbances. The 7th Battalion, which had completed its training was now moved to Damdil to relieve the 4th Frontier Force Regiment on 26 September. Road opening was one of the major responsibilities of the Damdil garrison and 7 J&K took its full share in the performance of this duty. The tribesmen tested the fibre of the Battalion more than once, before starting to treat it with due respect.

One of the first few occasions when the Battalion was operationally tested was when soonafter its arrival at Damdil it proceeded to occupy picquets in connection with the opening of Akl sector on 6 October 1941. That day while 'B' and 'C' companies were able to establish themselves on allotted picquets without any difficulty 'D' Company under 2nd Lieut Amar Singh was heavily fired upon by the hostiles when it approached the feature which it was to occupy. This did not, however, deter the young company commander, and with the help of artillery and Medium Machine Gun support he was finally able to take his company on to its objective. Some tribals were then seen collecting for a counter attack while others started working their way to the flanks with a view to surround the picquet. Even as the company engaged the hostiles with steady and effective fire, it displayed ground strips and requested for immediate air support. Soon the aircraft came over and carried out some prolonged straffing on the hostile concentration. Two NCOs, Naik Narinjan Singh and Lance Naik Teja Singh were wounded during the fire fight. Naik Narinjan Singh who was hit in the chest displayed conspicuous gallantry and admirable courage as he continued to command

his Lewis Gun section for three hours after sustaining this serious wound, ~~then~~ when he was forcibly avacuated. For this act of bravery and devotion to duty, Naranjan Singh was awarded the Indian Distinguished Service Medal (IDSM).

The same day 'B' Company under Captain Sohan Singh (Pathania) also got involved in heavy fighting ~~x~~ while shifting its position from one picquet to the other. The move was, however, completed under cover of own MMG fire. Hardly had this picquet been occupied when an Indian Air Force air-craft forced landed in the vicinity. Captain Sohan Singh immediately rushed down to the scene of the landing with one section and a nursing orderly. The party was fired upon by the tribals from all directions but it reached the aircraft before the tribals could caused any ~~harm~~ damage to the aircraft or harm the members of th crew who lay injured inside, ~~injured~~. the section guarded the aircraft till it could be the ~~crew could be evacuated and the aircraft~~ destroyed by personnnel of the Indian Air Force who arrived there for the purpose, and the crew evacuated to safety.

It was perhaps because of the firm and business like approach of the Battalion during these actions tha-t it was able to withdraw its picquets in the afternoon without much interference from the tribals.

The Battalion remained in Damdil till 16 January 1942 after which it was moved to Thal for a well earned respite from operational duties. The period from 20 January when the Battalion arrived at Thal to early November was usefully utilised for intensive training; both individual as well as collective. During the period the Battalion not only distinguished itself in training exercises but also made a name in sports by making a clean sweep of most of the trophies offered by the formation for competition in athletics and games. With players of all India fame forming part of the unit hockey team, it completely dominated other units of the formation in this game.

The stay of the Battalion at Thal was again not long and in early November it received its move orders to Jakhrao in eastern Sindh where

the turbulent Hur tribe had risen in revolt against the local authority. The role of the Battalion was to restore the confidence of the villagers in the authority of the Government, by protecting them from marauding raids of the Hurs. To achieve this the Battalion had to carry out intensive patrolling and organise raids on hostile concentrations in its area of responsibility. In the process the Battalion got split up into its companies, which were located at great distances from the Battalion Headquarters as also from each other. The companies had of necessity to, therefore, carry out operations against the hostile Hurs, independently. It is satisfying to note that the Company Commander did not lack in initative and had the hostiles on the run right from the word go, through imaginative patrolling and well executed raids on their hide-outs. Some of the important raids/ patrols organised by the companies are narrated in succeeding paragraphs.

'A' Company carried out a raid on Jammu Ghandio on 3 December '43, after receiving information about some hostiles having taken refuge in the village. The village was surrounded by the company and searched which resulted in the capture of the wanted Hurs, who were then handed over to the police.

Three hostiles were captured by 'D' Company on 4/5 December night when it raided village Alladad. These hostiles were nabbed when, during the raid ~~as it was being raided~~, they walked straight into the ambush which had been laid a little distance away from the village in anticipation of the hostile move.

On 10/11 December night a successful ambush by one platoon of 'A' Company was laid at Bihal Khasiq Ali, which place was known to be frequented by the hostiles. The platoon held fire as a party of hostile began to walk through the ambush and opened up only when the entire party was in its net. Three hostiles were killed while the rest were captured. In another raid in the vicinity of Point Rt. 180 on night 21/22 December the company apprehended some two hundred hostile Hurs.

On 12 December 'D' Company under Lieut Amar Singh surprised a gang of about 30 armed hostiles near the village of Avadh. In the fighting that ensued four Mars were killed while the rest fled into the swamps east of the village. The company carried out another raid on Christmas day and apprehended one hundred and sixty hostiles from the notorious Nuzzur village.

The combing operations by the Battalion continued through January next year, swelling the number of Mars that were brought to book, and by February the recalcitrant tribals were completely subdued. A large part of the credit for the restoration of peace in the area went to 7 J&K and the fact was duly recognised by the authorities concerned. The Commanding Officer Lt Col Chattar Singh was awarded the commendation card by the C-in-C India, General A Martley, in token of the good work done by the Battalion. The commendation card reads as follows :-

"Lieutenant Colonel Chattar Singh, the Kashmir Regiment, IS Forces your name has been brought to my notice for distinguished services during the upper Sind Force operations 1942-43. I congratulate you on your devotion to duty and thank you for the example you gave. I have directed that a note of your conduct should be made on your record of service".

After the successful conclusion of the operation in Sindh, the Battalion moved to Kohat in Feburary 1943. As at Jakharao, here too the Battalion swept all the cups and shields that were offered for competition in sports and won the Kohat Division Championship Shield, bringing great honour to the State. After the sports that day, the unit, led by the pipe band, marched triumphantly through Kohat town with the trophies won. This was followed by night long rejoimings.

In April 1944 the unit moved to Bannu and here it was over taken by misfortune. On 6 June Captain Amar Singh, known to be a capable and dashing young officer, was shot by a mad-hat, Jemadar Bishen Singh, of his company over some petty differences. Bishen Singh was arrested, tried by General

Court Martial and hanged at Jammu in August that year but that was not the end of the Battalion's bad days. Even before this unfortunate incident could be settled captain Nasib Singh was killed by a grenade thrown into his office by a disgrundled other rank of his company. Whatever may have been the ~~reasons for the clamity that befell the Battalion its fate was doomed~~ circumstances that led to the occurrence of these two incidents one after the other, the fate of the Battalion now stood doomed. Pending final decision on the future of Battalion, it was moved to Mir Ali Camp in August 1944 where it stayed for three months and then moved to Razmak in November.

By the end of the year it had been decided to disband the Battalion and orders for the disbandment were formally read out to the Battalion at Razmak on 15 January 1945, by Brigadier Ghansara Singh who had specially arrived there specially for this purpose. The Battalion was then moved to Dina Camp near Jhelum in Punjab to complete the formalities of disbandment. The Battalion was at that time composed of 212 British Indian Sikhs, 224 State Rajput Sikhs and some 360 Kangra Rajputs.[35] Most of the personnel were either discharged or transferred to the Indian Army. Only about 150 state subjects returned to Jammu to be absorbed in the State Force. It was rather a sad end to the service of the Battalion that had shown good promise during the twelve years or so of its existence.

9TH J&K INFANTRY[36]

In early August 1942 when the 9th Battalion was just about two years old, it was mobilised for service under the Crown and left the State for Kohat at the end of the month under command of Lieut Colonel Ram Lal, and, of course, accompanied by the SSOs. It reached Kohat on 28 August and after a month's stay here it moved to Thal. It remained under the Thal Brigade for about a year and a half carrying out the usual frontier routine in Kurram Valley with nothing of much interest taking place during this period. Thereafter the unit moved to south

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35. Notes Lt Col Puran Singh Sambyal
36. Based on Historical Section Ministry of Defence file no 601/1699/H and draft history of J&K Rifles (1965) 7649/H

Waziristan in April 1944, to join the Wana Brigade. Here again it followed the same routine as at Thal. During the normal bi-weekly movement of troops and supplies up and down the Manzai-Wana road, picquets had to be established to protect the convoys from being sniped at or from being ambushed by hostile tribesmen. When not engaged on operational duties, the Battalion carried out normal training which included lectures and demonstrations, on the various aspects of Frontier warfare, to other units of the Wana Brigade. In all these activities the Battalion so distinguished itself that it too came to be treated as the "spot battalion" of the Brigade in keeping with the traditions set by the 2nd J&K Rifles. Needless to say that much of the credit for the high standard of training and efficiency of the Battalion went to its commanding officer Colonel Ram Lal and the happy team of officers under him. It is perhaps a compliment to the operational efficiency of the Battalion that the Pathan usually left it alone and in the three years and more that the Battalion operated in the Frontier, the hostiles decided on a skirmish with the Dogras only twice. That the Battalion ~~coming~~ came out of this hostile infested area, totally unscathed, is an achievement unique in itself.

The efficiency of the Battalion was duly recognised and in February 1945 it was selected for active service in Burma. In preparation for this some officers and other ranks of the unit were sent to the various jungle warfare camps and centres. In the meantime, however Japan surrendered and the Battalion was ordered back to Jammu in the third week of September 1945. On its way home, the following message from Lieut General H Finnis GOC-in-C North Western Army was read out to the unit at a parade at Rawalpindi.

"On the occasion of your departure from the North Western Army to return to Kashmir at the request of His Highness the Maharaja, I wish you ~~have done~~ since to express my thanks for the very excellent work you have done since you have been in the

North Western Army. You commenced your duties on the Frontier at Kohat in Aug' 42 and then went to Thal and from there to Kanta, a total period of over three years. During this time you have deservedly gained a great reputation for efficiency and cooperation.

"Your efficiency was recognised by General Headquarters and you were selected for an operational role, but hostilities ceased before you had an opportunity of proving your worth in battle.

"By your keenness and soldierly bearing, you have enhanced the reputation of the Kashmir Army and you may well be ~~proud~~ proud of the assistance you have rendered to the Government of India in their hour of need.

"In bidding you farewell I thank you and wish you all, officers and men, prosperity and happiness in the future".

On arrival at Srinagar the Battalion was given a befitting welcome by His Highness the Maharaja and other officials of the State. A big feast was arranged which was attended by the Ruler and other members of the Royal family.

Having moved by road the Battalion had brought with it one command waggon, 9 x 15 cwt trucks and 16 x 3 ton lorries which were transferred to the J&K Mechanical Transport Section.[37]

STATE'S OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WAR EFFORT[38]

Apart from the large number of its troops having been placed at the disposal of the British Indian Government for use during the War, the Jammu and Kashmir State made substantial contributions to the war effort in many other forms. Some of these are enumerated below :-

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37. J&K Administrative Report 1945-46.

38. Based on J&K Administrative Reports 1939-40, 1941-43, 1944-45, 1945-46 and J&K Information April 1944.

(a) During the early stages of the war the Maharaja presented 18 fully equipped motor ambulances- six for the British Expeditionary Force in France, six for the French Army and six for the Indian Army. Subsequently during 1944-45 half squadron of fighter aircraft (8 in number) at a cost of £40,000/- was offered to the Viceroy for use in the War. An additional sum equivallent to £ 10,000/- was also offered to meet the cost of two fighter aircraft as reserve to the half squadron.

(b) A portion of the Kashmir House at Delhi was placed at the disposal of the Government of India free of rent for accomodation of some government offices.

(c) At the commencement of the War the Maharaja appointed an influential War Aid Committee with Her Highness the Maharani as the president, to paise funds for providing comforts to troops engaged in the War. The Kashmir War Aid Committee made a total contribution of over Rs. 14,46,000/-. The Committee sent large consignments of knitted woollen articles and hospital requirements to the State Forces units serving out side the State, the Red Cross Depot at Lahore and the Red Cross Commissioner in the Middle East. Special collections were made on "China Day" and a cheque for Rs. 25,393/- was sent to Madam Chiang Kai Shak on the occasion. The Committee also adopted 10 Polish children for a period of one year.

(d) The Maharaja himself made liberal contributions to the War effort from his Privy Purse. Apart from his individual contribution of Rs. 3,39,347/- to the Kashmir War Aid Committee he made substantial personal donations to various other war funds including Lord Mayor's Fund for the relief of the suffering and the homeless in England. Later in response to the Viceroy's appeal, he adopted 5 Polish children (refugees) in British India for a period of one year. He even placed his personal Lock Head

aeroplane at the disposal of the Government of India for use in connection with the War.

(e) The State's most important contribution towards the War effort, however, was the supply of thousands of wooden components of rifles (such as fore handguards, fore ends, butts and the rear hand guards) manufactured by State artisans. Besides, hundreds of thousands of shovels, table knives, clasp knives, etc manufactured in the State, were supplied to the British Government. Other important locally manufactured items supplied to the British Government for use of troops during the War were the lakhs of yard yards of parachute cloth (2,55,110 yards) by the end of 1943 and large quantities of State manufactured woollen goods.

OTHER ACTIVITIES DURING THE PERIOD

The Kazaki Affair[39]

Sometimes in July 1942 intelligence reports were received at the J&K Army Headquarters which indicated a threat of large scale ingress by armed Kazaks into Ladakh after being drived out of their country by the Russian Communists. Not knowing the ultimate intentions of the Kazaks, the State was rather alarmed and Lieut Colonel Abdual Majid Khan who was then Commanding the 6th J&K Infantry, that was responsible for the security of the Ladakhi border, was ordered to take out a company column from Srinagar to Leh for investigating the matter and taking action as deemed necessary. Consequently on 15 July 1942, Lieut Colonel Abdul Majid set out with a company of his Battalion for Leh. 'B' Company of the 6th Battallion was already stationed at Leh but the Company Commander could not provide any more information about the Kazaks than the meagre information provided to Colonel Majid by the Army Headquarters. Unfortunately Unconfirmed reports by local inhabitants indicated that a caravan

39. Based on Jammu and Kashmir Arms by Maj Gen D K Palit pp 126-27 and Kashmiris' Fight For Freedom vol 1 by Mohd Yusuf Saraf pp 572-73.

of six to seven thousand people most of whom were armed with modern automatic weapons was heading towards the Ladakhi border, after having over-powered the Tibetan garrison at Gartok. Colonel Majid, therefore, decided to advance towards the border and meet the Kazaks at Demchok. On arriving at Demchok on 13 August, the column took up a defensive position and then lay in wait for the would be intuders.

The forward elements of the Kazak Caravan made contact with the column of the 6th Battalion on Ist September. After a brief fight, in which the Kazaks suffered some casualties, the refugees raised the white flag and sued for peace. They agreed to being disarmed and sought the State Government's permission for, either allowing them to settle in Ladakh, or affording them safe passage to British India through Kashmir. The State Government agreed to grant their request for safe passage to British India. During the process of disarming, it was found that the refugees were about four thousand in number, including women and children, and carried with them some seven hundred rifles, twelve light machine guns three revolvers and several thousand rounds of ammunition. It appears that the Kazaks had planned to enter the State to seek refuge and they had no intentions of fighting or resisting their being disarmed by the State authority. The fighting that took place was probably due to some misunderstanding. The border in the area being ill defined, they did not even probably know that they were entering State territory when they actually did, nor as to whom they were up against when the State troops fired on them. After being disarmed the caravan was escorted to Srinagar over the Zajila Pass and thence into British India; being well looked after by the State authorities all the way.

Training[40]

It was quite natural that training should have formed the most

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40. J&K Administrative Reports 1938-39, 1940-41, 1941-43 and 1944-45.

~~It was quite natural that training should have formed the most~~ important activity during the period of the War, and so it did. Besides individual training in the handling of weapons, regular collective training camps were held for all units that remained behind in the State. Stress was laid on anti-aircraft training, chemical warfare, jungle and mountain warfare, camouflage from the air, field works and minor tactics as dictated by the War that was in progress. Due attention was paid to the training of Indian Officers (IOs) and the NCOs. Regular courses were runf for them by the J&K Training School while vacancies at various schools of instructions in British India offered to the State were fully utilised. A large number of such IOs and NCOs were awarded the 'Distinguished' grade on the various courses they attended in India. In order to improve the grading prospects of candidates proceeding on equitation courses at Saugor, permission was granted to them for taking two trained charges with them on the course instead of only one allowed until then.

The greatest effort was made to train the State Officers to the level of their counterparts in the Indian Army. Vacancies were obtained for them at the Staff College Quetta and captain Dina Nath was the first to graduate from there in 1940. Sanction in principle to the deputation of State Officers to the Junior Staff College at Quetta at a reduced fee of £ 200 a year (from £ 400/- earlier) was obtained and officers detailed for it. With mechanised warfare gaining importance during the war, special efforts were made to acquaint the State Officers with the latest developments in this field. In 1940-41 two batches of three senior officers each were attached to mechanised units of the Indian Army for a period of three months. Further more, to assist the State Officers in their professional studies a comprehensive correspondence course in military subjects was instituted by the J&K Army Headquarters. Correspondence courses were also run by the Deputy Chief of Military Staff for coaching Officers for promotion examinations. Retention

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examinations were introduced for the 2nd Lieutenants to ~~includ~~ inculcate in them the habit of professional study right from the beginning. Apart from conducting the training of its own officers, the State also conducted its share of central courses for Indian State Forces(ISF) Officers. One such course was the preliminary signal course which was conducted at Srinagar in 1939-40 for officers from Bharatpur, Udaipur, Jodhpur and Gwalior, besides those from own Army.

Shooting Competitions[41]

The quality of the weapon training carried out by the units of the J&K State Force reflected itself in the shooting competitions conducted by the Army in India Rifle Association for the Indian State Forces at Meerut. In 1938-39 the 2nd J&K Rifles won the Prince of Wales (Malerkotla) Cup while the 5th J&K Light Infantry secured second position in the Jodhpur Cup (ISF aggregate championship cup). The 2nd Battalion did even better the following year (1940), by bagging a lot more trophies and medals than before. It won the Military Advisor-in-Chief's Cup, Military Advisors Cup, the Jodhpur Cup, and the Havlock Cup. Besidds these it won one large silver medal and sixteen small silver medals for individual performance by the members of the team. The performance of the J&K Units improved still further in 1941 when they swept all the trophies that were offered for competition to the Indian State Forces by the Army Rifle Association.

Sports[42]

Not only did the J&K Troops excell in shooting but also in the field of sports and Athletics. In 1938-39, just before the war broke out the 7th J&K Infantry had the honour of winning the over-all championship shield during the Punjab State Forces Athletic Meet. Sports competitions were, it appears, discontinued during the period of the war.

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41. J&K Administrtive Reports 1938-39, to 1940-41, ~~1941-43 and 1944-45~~,
42. Ibid 1938-39.

Pay and Allowances

For obvious reasons the pays and allowances of the State Forces personnel could never have matched with the Indian Army rates of pay but in the case of J&K the pays were lower than even those of other Indian State Forces. The reason for this was that J&K being a border State was required to maintain a much larger army than any other Princely state in India and this had to be done within the financial restraints that were exercised by the State's poor monetary resources. The disparity was more marked in case of officers than the Other Ranks and the difference must have shown up more after the British SSO had been removed and the State Officers came in direct contact with the Officers of the Indian Army on equal terms, while serving together during the War. It was not that the disparity caused any disaffection among the State Force Officers. Firstly the difference in pay was not as much as it appeared, if some perks, like free house, free horse, and Syce and free uniforms (such as service Dress and Mess dress etc) which the State Force Officer received, but his counterpart in the Indian Army did not, were taken into account and secondly, the bonds of loyalty of the officers to the State and the Maharaja were so strong in those day that they could not be shaken by the rates of pay, however low they may have been. What troubled the State Officer was the anxiety that low rates of pay may not determine their status visa-vis their counterparts in the Indian Army. At a time when the Officers of the State Force were striving for equality with the equivalent ranks in the Indian Army, on the basis of "same work same status", any reference by the latter to the rates of pay of the former must have been very embarrassing to the State Officers. In his book War on Two Fronts, Lieut Colonel Bhagwan Singh refers to such an embarrassing moment when as a Battery Commander in the Middle East he was asked by his formation commander to furnish the rates of pay of the officers of his Battery for the purposes of calculation of some allowances that became admissible to them. Colonel

Bhagwan Singh seems to have got out of the embarrassing situation by pointing out that the quarry was not very relavent and as such did not need to be answered.[43]

Evidently Maharaja Hari Singh had received some indication of the discomposure that his officers were suffering on account of the low rates of pay, while he was on tour in the Middle East in 1941, and immediately on return to the State he set about to revise the pays of the State Officers to bring them at par with, atleast, the officers of the forces of other major princely states. It may be mentioned here that Maharaja Hari Singh had always taken the keenest interest in raising the status of his officers and, in keeping with the values cherished in those days,(and even today), he had introduced them to the living style of the British Officers in India. Hat, which was the status symbol of the time, had already replaced the turban which the State Officers were wearing till as late as 1931. The system of officers messes had also been introduced and apart from the unit messes that normally functioned only during field conditions, there were two brigade messes, one each at Srinagar and Jammu. The Maharaja took personal interest in the upkeep of these messes and apart from sanctioning liberal official grants for equipping them, he made personal contributions in cash and kind to raise the standard of the messes. The billiard tables and most of the crockery and cutlery in both the messes was for instance donated by him when the messes were started. He visited these messes frequently to ensure that they were alwaysswell maintained. He could not, therefore, have been unaware of the feelings of his officers as regards their pays. What seems to have been his problem was the State's soaring military budget. In the year 1942 when he was considering the revision of pay the war expenditure on the army amounted to Rs. 25,62000/- over and above the normal State budget of Rs. 50,38,000/- making a staggering total figure of Rs. 76,00,000/-. The military Rakhs continued to be the

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43. Lt. Colonel Bhagwan Singh Jammu on Two Fronts p 111

Army's good source of income fetching in about Rs. 2 lakhs a year but this was just a drop in the ocean as far as the military budget was concerned. The Maharaja was however determined to make a substantial raise in the pays of officers immediately and to overcome the budgetary restraints during the year he decided that the extra expenditure involved over and above the provisions in the budget be paid from his Privy Purse.[44] The resultant increase in pay of officers took the following forms:-[45]

Rank	old pay	new pay
Brigadier	Rs. 700/- p.m.	Rs. 900/- p.m.
Lieut Colonel	Rs. 450/- p.m.	Rs. 600/- p.m.
Major	Rs. 250/- p.m.	Rs. 425/-p.m.(Rs.500/- in case of OC Unit)
Captain	Rs.200/- p.m.	Rs. 325/- p.m.
Lieutenant	Rs. 150/- p.m.	Rs. 225/- p.m.

The rates of pay of cadets attending the Officers Training School in the British India were raised in 1945 from Rs. 275/- to Rs. 315/- p.m. for the unmarried and to Rs. 370/- p.m. for the married cadet.[46]

The new pay scheme effected the other sepoy rank also but only to the extent of a raise of Rs. 1/- p.m. i.e. from Rs. 13/- to Rs. 14/- p.m. The sepoy's pay was increased again in 1944-45 by Rs. 2/- p.m. bringing it upto Rs. 16/- p.m. Some increase was also made in his ration allowance.[47]

Appointments[48]

His Highness Maharaja Hari Singh had the distinction of being appointed member of the British War Council in 1944. Rai Bahadur Dewan Amar Nath took over as the Army Minister wef 25th November 1942. The

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44. J&K Administrative Report 1941-43
45. Notes of Lt Col Puran Singh Sambyal
46. J&K Administrative Report 1945-46
47. Ibid 1944-45
48. J&K Administrative Report 1945 from 1939 to 1945.

post of the Deputy Chief of Staff which was being held by Lieut Colonel NFS Chaplin since December 1938 was abolished in 1941. The Jammu Brigade was Commanded by Brig Ghansar Singh till the end of May 1942 whereafter Brigadier Rajinder Singh took over. The Kashmir Brigade was commanded by Brigadier Rahmat Ullah Khan from the end of 1939 to the middle of 1943. Thereafter it was taken over by Brigadier Udai Chand. The appointment of General Staff Officer was upgraded with effect from May 1942 and Brigadier Ghansar Singh was appointed to it.

His Highness the Maharaja was pleased to honour his State Force by appointing Sri Yuvraj Karan Singh to be 2nd Lieutenant with effect from 7 October 1939, when the he was just 8½ years old. After that ath the Yuvraj was put through a course in drill and physical training at the J&K Training School.

The State Soldiers Board

A soldiers board was set up in the State for looking after the welfare of the State's exservicemen during the period of the war. At the end of the war the State Government approved the amalgamation of the State Soldier Board with the Indian Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen Board organisations.[49]

Medical

The post of Senior Medical Officer(SMO) was separated from that of Officer Commanding Military hospital at Jammu in 1939 and Colonel Nand Lal was appointed to it.

Provision for medical treatment of families of State Force personnel was sanctioned in 1939. Consequently two posts of female Sub Assistant Surgeons were created; one each for the Military Hospital at Jammu and Srinagar. Provision of suitable family wards in the ~~sick~~ the two military hospitals was consequently made. The same year the system of examining the sick report at the MI Room before parade time was introduced.[50]

Garrison Police

Six companies of Garrison Police, each 100 strong, were raised in

49. Ibid
50. Ibid 1938-39

1945-46 for internal security duties. They seem to have mostly consisted of ex-servicemen.[51]

THE END OF THE WAR

The war in Europe ended on 8th May, 1945 and the victory of the Allies was celebrated in the State as it was in other parts of the country. A Royal Salute of 31 Guns was fired from all the forts simultaneously, with the announcement of the Armistise by the British Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchil. The next two days were observed as holidays during which thanks giving prayers were held, government and private buildings were illuminated and sweets were distributed to troops. Similar celebrations were held when Japan surrendered on 15th August 1945.

As the war came to an end on all fronts, the State units that had gone out for service under the crown, both in the North West Frontier Province, as well as on the battle front started returning to the State one by one, literarly soaked in glory. The 9th Battaion was the first to arrive reaching Srinagar on 30 September 1945. The next to arrive was the 4th Battalion which rearched Jammu on 15 October while the 2nd Battalion returned last of all on 30 January 1946. Three These units never returned- the two mountain batteries having been disbanded. transferred to the Indian Army and the 7th Jak Infantry having been disbanded. They were naturally missed by the people of the State.[52]

At the end of the War, the State Force, some of the units of which had been tested on the envil of war, was undoubtedly at the peak of its efficiency. It was well that it was so, for, had it been otherwise the malevolent and pervicious circumstances under which it had to operate during the next two years might have caused its total distintegration. What these extraordinary circumstances were and how the State Force pulled through them forms the subject matter of the next chapter

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51. Ibid 1945-46

52. Ibid

CHAPTER VIII

THE HOUR OF TRIAL

After the period of hectic activity relating to training and operations involving a strenuous work out during the war years, the J&K State Force may well have expected to enjoy a few years spell of peace, that normally follows a war. This however, was not to be and no sooner than the war had come to an end than the state troops were called upon to perform duties which proved to be more onerous and exacting than what they had gone through during the period of the war. It was not just the discomfort and physical strain resulting from operations in a difficult terrain, lacking in roads and tracks, that made the difference. The uniqueness of the situation lay in the vastness of the border of the State that was required to be defended by a relatively small force and the total absence of any organised logistic support to the troops. As if this was not enough, the virus of communal hatred, which was so pains-takingly cultivated by the protagonists of Pakistan, penetrated the State Force and at the most crucial hour a large portion of its Muslim component, forgetting the oath of allegience to the Ruler and the State, crossed over to the enemy after murdering their unwary Hindu comrades-in-arms.

MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER

The shadows of coming events had perhaps started appearing even as the last shorts of the War were being fired and the State Government, in anticipation of the troubled times ahead requested the Government of India to release the State Force units serving under the Crown as early after the war as possible. Independence was on the cards and the communal hatreds which alone could justify the demand for the partition of the country, had already been whipped up by the leaders of the Muslim League to such a dangerous level that violence between the Hindus and the Muslims could have broken out any time, at the slightest

opportunity. The State Government was therefore faced with the problem of preventing this trouble in British India, from spilling over into the State; particularly in the Poonch and Mirpur districts, the predominently Muslim population of which area was being subverted by propaganda from across the border. This area of the State had a long border with that part of Punjab which was known to be the hot bed of communal Muslim politics and due to a number of reasons the people of the area had their faces turned more towards British India than towards Jammu. The main one was that because of the distance, and the not too good means of communications, Jammu was difficult of access. In contrast the close proximity of Punjab, and better means of communication leading to it, had made the people dependent on Punjab much more than on Jammu. Besides this, the people of the area had strong links with British India through the Indian Army which they joined in large numbers. It was particularly said about Poonch that every male muslim in the Jagir was, had been or when old enough would be a soldier in the Indian Army. It was little wonder, therefore that the Muslims of the Mirpur-Poonch area had come under the influence of communal politics of the Punjabi Muslim and could be used at will by the latter for fomenting trouble in the State. It is also not surprising that ever since Mohammad Iqbal propounded the idea of the federation of the Muslim majority provinces of northern India (to include Kashmir) in 1930, the Mirpur-Poonch area had become a cauldron, seething in a state of, more or less, violent agitation; merging at times into open rebellion. The area was infact officially declared as disturbed area since then.[1]

Since the communal disturbances of 1932, one battalion was permanently located at Naoshera. Initially detachments from this battalion used to be located at Mirpur and Kotli but as the situation

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1. Major General HL Scott notes written after his retirement and sent to Lt Col PN Kak, supplemented by notes by Brigadier Krishna Singh.

improved the whole battalion remained concentrated at Naoshera. Columns were occasionally sent out from the Naoshera battalion to tour the Mirpur district and the Poonch Jigir. Law and order in the Poonch Jagir was maintained by the 'Jagirdara' troops, some fifty strong, which the Raja (a decendant of Raja Dhynn Singh, brother of Maharaja Gulab Singh), there had been permitted to enrol for the purpose. This strength had invariably to be supplemented by State troops during major disturbances. During the War, the military strength in the disturbed area had of necessity to be reduced by two companies and two platoons; one of its companies having had to be located at Bunji, one at Leh and two platoons at Skardu. At the end of the War in 1945, therefore, the State Force, less the units serving under the Crown, was disposed as under :-[2]

1st Infantry (Raghupratap)	- Jammu Cantt.
6th Infantry	- Jammu Cantt.
3rd Rifles (Raghunath)	- Badami Bagh Cantt Srinagar
8th Infantry	- Badami Bagh Cannt Srinagar
5th Light Infantry (Suraj Gorkha)	- Naoshera with detachment at Bunji, Leh and Skardu.

The 9th Battalion was the first to return to the State after the War and was stationed at Srinagar. Indeed it had returned not a little too soon, and even as it was in the process of settling down, it was called upon to meet the situation arising out of a threatened stir by the people of the Mirpur-Poonch area. The move was made, by companies, over the Haji Pir to Poonch, Kotli and finally to Dharamsal Jhangar where the whole battalion concentrated by 20 October 1945. Apparently the stir was related to some genuine and some imaginary grievances of the people but communal over-tones were noticeable never-the less. Patrols and columns, some times upto three companies

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2. Brig Krishna Singh, Notes. All notes of the Brigadier were found to have been based primarily on official documents

strength, were organised by the Battalion from Jhangar, into the affected areas at varying intervals and by the middle of November every small town and most of the villages in the Mirpur district and the Poonch Jagir had been visited by the troops. These visits served the dual purpose of flag marches and of making contact with the people to listen to their grievances. Through this timely action untoward incidents were averted. The people appeared generally happy at being able to communicate their grievances; the prime one being the lack of roads in their area.[3] The need for opening up the country through constructions of roads and tracks, which was not only economic but also a strategic one, had already been recognised by the State Government and some effort towards this end had been made in the thirties. The work had, however, got stalled during the period of the War for financial reasons. After the War the British Indian Government allotted funds to the important recuiting areas in India (including princely states) for expediture on the welfare of the population of these areas. The amount detailed for each area was to be proportionate to the number of recruits supplied by it during the War and naturally an appreciable amount had fallen to th share of the Mirpur-Poonch area; the great recruiting ground of the Indian Army. The State decided to utlise the amount for the development and construction of roads as a measure of welfare of the people of these areas and Major General ML Scott, the Chief of Military staff, was detailed to negotiate with the Indian Government for the release of the amount allotted. Interestingly while heads were being counted for determining the amount for each area, the people got the impression that they were to receive their share individually in cash and when the State Government did not dole out the cash to the individuals, this became one of their grievances against the administration.[4]

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3. Ibid

4. Notes Maj Gen ML Scott.

* Brig Scott was promoted to the rank of Maj Gen by the Maharaja in 1945-46. The exact date of his promotion is not known.

Raising of Garrison Police

Columns similar to the ones in the Mirpur-Poonch area were also organised by units of the Jammu Brigade, (which included the 4th Battalion which had since returned to the State), into Reasi, Rajouri, Bhaderwah and Kishtwar areas during the last week of November and the Ist week of December 1945. Although no untoward incident had taken place anywhere in the State so far, reprecussions of the communal tension which was building up in India could be sensed every where; particularly in the border areas of Jammu, Mirpur and Poonch where it was feared that the bubble could burst any moment. So as not to tie up the army on purely police roles raising of twelve Garrison companies was sanctioned in the month of November 1945. The responsibility for the training of these companies was entrusted to the J&K Training Battalion at Satwari. After some basic military training, the men were trained in lathi drill and other police methods of dealing with crowds and unlawful assemblies.[5]

Armed Dacoities

As if to justify the raising of the Garrison Companies, there started at the end of November a spate of armed dacoities in the border areas of the State. It started with the looting of the government treasury at Palandri. This was suspected to be the work of some military deserters who had taken refuge with Saffis of the Kahuta hill area in Rawalpindi district. Two companies of the 9th Battalion were despatched from Jhangar to Palandri to augment the police force there. But even as this case was being investigated another armed dacoity took place near Thana in Rajauri Tehsil. This was again suspected to be the work of Indian Army exservicemen and the Chief of Staff J&K, took up the mattar with the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief Northern Command India, who promised to take action against any exservicemen involved in

5. Notes Brig Krishna Singh

these cases. Evidently he did take stern action and decities in this area were checked. Consequently in January 1946 one company of the 9th Battalion moved back from Palandri to Dharamsal Jhangar. This, however, was not to be the end of armed decoities from across the border. Only the venue seems to have shifted and the beginning of the new year saw a series of such decoities in the Jammu and Kathua districts. By now the Garrison companies were trained and ready, and the situation was met by posting No 3 and 4 companies in Jammu town, to take over guard duties and thus free the police for decoit hunting. Detachments of the Body Guard Cavalry ~~Guard Cabalry were employed, two in Jammu and one in Kathua.~~ detailed to co-operate with the police in patrolling the border in the Jammu and Kathua districts. In all, three squadrons were employed - two in Jammu and one in Kathua.[6]

Communal Riots in Jammu[7]

Meanwhile in India the Muslim League had gained in strength. In the elections that were held for the provincial assemblies, it had secured 446 seats out of the 495 Muslim seats giving it the moral authority to represent the Muslim cause in India. Consequently the campaign for Pakistan had gained momentum and with it the communal tension in India was fast approaching breaking point. As the demand for Pakistan could only be justified by showing that the Hindus and Muslims could no longer live in peace, every effort was made by the Muslim League to disturb communal harmony, lest its case be lost. This effort was as much directed towards the J&K, State as it was towards other Muslim majority areas of Northern India, and Jammu town, because of its proximity to Sialkot, received their special attention in this regards. The Sialkot Muslims were in constant touch with their co-religionists in Jammu and in the beginning of the year 1946 some 'Goondas' were specially despatched to Jammu for fomenting communal trouble there. Id-i-Milad which fell on 15 Feburary was probably chosen as the day for starting riots in a big way and to ensure the co-operation of the Hindus, (for it takes two to start a fight), a carcass of a calf was put on display

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6. Ibid
7. Ibid

with town on the 12th. Consequently on the day of the Id the Hindus were too excited to miss the opportunity. The Muslims were permitted to take out Id procession on 15 Feburary after they had promised to keep it peaceful. They had, however, sought permission to shout pro-Pakistan slogans and this was granted to them. As a precautionary measure the police in the city was reinforced by another company of the Garrison Police, one being already there. There was also a military column, with sufficient mechanical transport at Satwari, which stood ready to move into the town at short notice, as per normal practice.

Communal fighting broke out after the procession had covered half its distance. The spark was provided by the pro-pakistan slogans being shouted by the processionists which provoked the other community to shout counter slogans and very soon it was a free-for-all. As the situation got out of control of the police, the military column, a company strong from the training Battalion, was rushed to the city. The company carried lathis but no rifles. As the rioting continued this company was later reinforced by a company each from the 2nd and the 4th Battalions. These companies also carried only lathis and no rifles as per normal practice. The Police and the army were able to control the rioters to a large extent in the main streets but incidents continued in lanes and bye lanes, leaving three killed and about 87 injured at the end of the day. Next day the situation deteriorated further and the City Disturbance Column was ordered into town. This column carried arms slung on the shoulders in addition to lathis. Detachments from the Column, as per standing drill, took over all strategic points in the city while the remainder assisted the 'lathi' troops in clearing the lanes and driving the people into their houses. Thereafter the people were forced to remain indoors and soon peace returned to the town. Curfew, however, continued on the 17th as the police went about arresting known offenders. Interestingly sellers of

vegetables, fruits and other food items were collected and made to go round the streets selling their wares to the people in their houses. Similarly squads of sweepers were made to work under army protection to keep the city clean. The people who arrived from Sialkot by train on some pretext or the other were thoroughly screened at the railway station and the suspected mischief mongers were forced to return to Sialkot by the next train. The eastern, western, and the southern approaches to the town were intensively patrolled by the Body Guard Cavalry.

As a result of "Sympathetic detonation", communal tension appeared in Kathua town on 17 Feburary. On request from Wazir Kathua the squadron of the Cavalry which was encamped outside Kathua for purposes of patrolling the border was ordered into the town. This anticipatory action saved the situation in Kathua. Precautionary measures were also taken in the Mirpur area and one company of the 9th Infantry was moved from Jhangar to Mirpur. One platoon from the same Battalion was moved to Kotli. Further, considering the situation as it was developing in India, and the reprecussions it was bound to have in the Mirpur-Poonch area, the strength of troops in the area was increased by another battalion; the Raghupratap moving from Jammu to Jhangar during the last week of Feburary. Patrolling in the Jammu, Poonch and Mirpur areas was intensified.

Trouble in Kotli

Even as these precauttionary measures were being taken trouble broke out in Kotli during the first week of March 1946. It was alleged by the Muslims there that the Hindu Head Master of the High School at Kotli had made remarks hurtful to their religious feelings. The Government ordered investigations but the mischiefmakers exploited the situation to create bad-blood between the two communities. Pir Sardar Ali Shah announced his intention to lead Jathas from Mirpur to Kotli. Consequently one company from the 9th Battalion was rushed to Mirpur

from Jhangar while another followed after a few days(making a total of three companies at Mirpur), and the Jathas were checked. Trouble broke out again on 18 March when the Government announced its verdict on the Head Master. He had been found guilty and dismissed from service and this provoked the Hindus to take out processions against the decision of the Government while the Muslims reacted by taking out processions welcoming the verdict. The situationx was, however, fully under control by the 19th of March, after several leaders from both the communities had been arrested. Never-the-less the police force at Mirpur was augmented by two companies (one Gorkha and one Muslim) of the Garrison Police.[8]

Raising of the Mirpur-Poonch Brigade

For better command and control over the troops located in the Mirpur-Poonch area, they were, during the third week of March organised into an operational brigade under the Command of Brigadier Ghansara Singh with his headquarters at Jhangar. The Brigade was disignated as No 3 Operational Brigade (later designated as the Mirpur-Poonch Brigade) and was composed of units as under:-[9]

(a) 5th J&K Light Infantry (less two companies and two platoons) at Naoshera.

(b) 9th J&K Infantry with headquarters at Jhangar.

(c) Ist J&K Infantry with the headquarters at Pandar(5 miles from Jhangar)

(d) Detachment J&K Transport.

(e) Two Garrison Police companies at Mirpur.

(f) Other anciliary troops.

The month of April 1946 remained generally quiet. The troops activity during this period consisted of patrolling along the Punjab border between the Ravi and the Chinab Rivers for checking smuggling of food stuffs out of the State. General patrolling in Mirpur, Poonch,

8. Ibid
9. Ibid

Reasi, Bhaderwah and Kishtwar to keep contact with the people of these areas was also continued during the month. Some trouble (not communal) between the people and the Raja broke out at Chineni. One company from the Jammu Brigade was kept stand by at Kud till a settlement between the people and the Raja was arrived at[10]

Food Situation

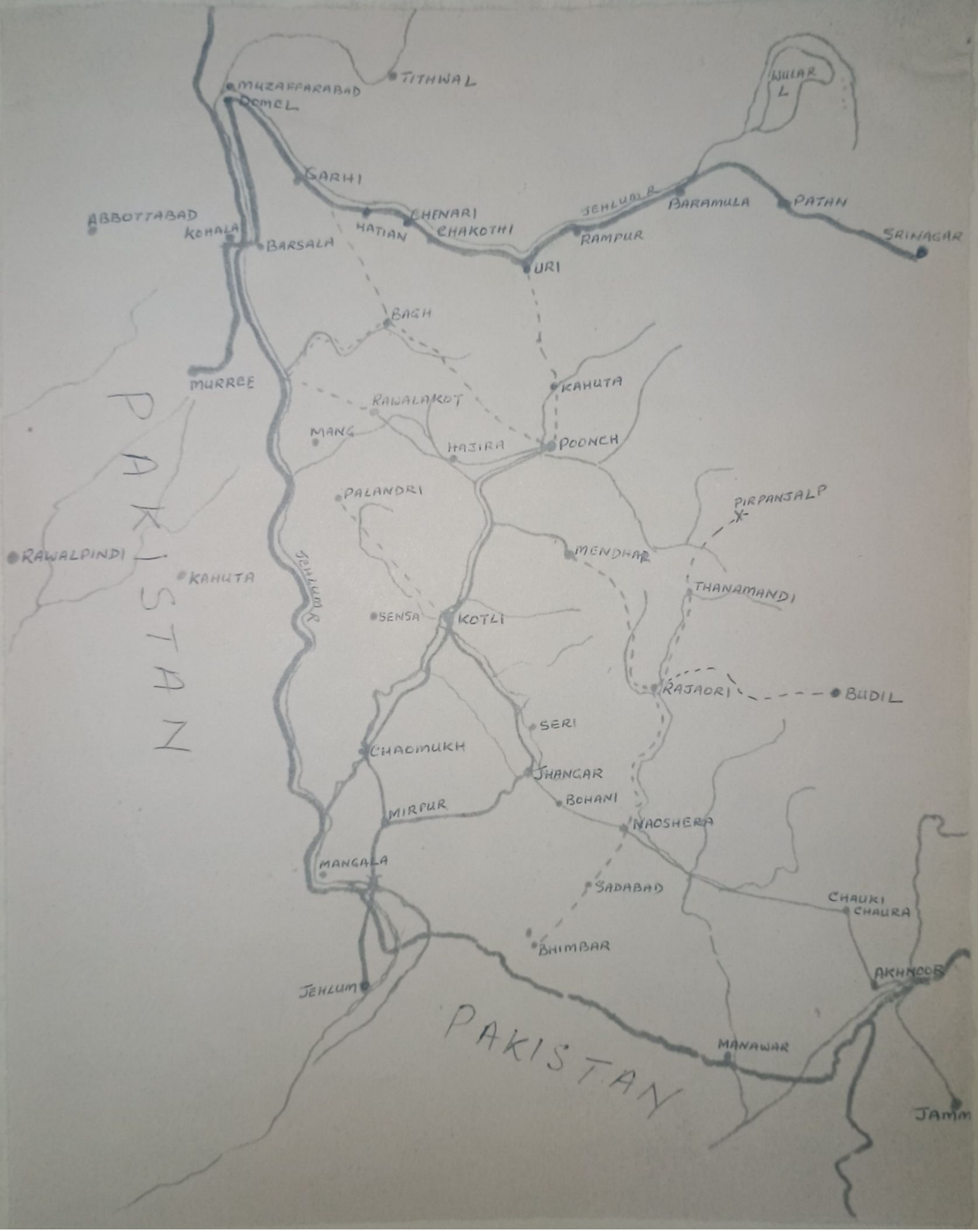
The food situation in the State had by this time become very acute. The army rose to the occasion as usual, and agreed to accept maize upto 1/3 of its grain rations and the remainder 2/3 as wheat atta and rice in any proportion convenient to the controller of food supplies. Along side the army started a grow more food compaign. Competitions between units were held and prizes were awarded to units with maximum production in a particular stations[11]

Uneasy Peace

Peace in the Mirpur- Poonch area, though encouraging for the Government and the army, was stiffling for the supporters of Pakistan, for whom peace meant weakening of their case. To keep the issue alive disturbances were created in Kotli over a minnor issue on 4 May and when these were checked by timely intetvention by the detachment of the 9th Battalion an agitation was started over a, more or less, dead issue. During the 1931-32 agitation the State Government had taken over control of a mosque in Kotli and retained it since then. The agitators now reopened the issue and sought control over the Mosque. A Jatha from Mirpur marched to Kotli and forced its entry into the disputed mosque on 11 May. All the memebers of the Jatha were promptly arrested and so were the members of the Jathas that arrived subsequently on 14th and 15th May. The need for calling in the army did not arise as the situation was efficiently controlled by the Garrison Police before the end or the month. Poonch, however, continued to remain quiet, though the

10. Ibid
11. Ibid

SOUTH-WESTERN JAMMU AND KASHMIR



situation there was also tense as a result of the political developments in British India. In order to have troops handy for meeting any eventuality, one company of the 1st Battalion was moved to Rajira as a permanent measure. The development of other troops in the area as on 15 June 1946 was as under:- [12]

(a) Headquarters 3rd Operational Brigade - Naoshera

(b) 6th J&K Infantry (which had since replaced 5th Light)

Battalion less 3 coys- Naoshera; one platoon- Rajauri; One platoon- Bari Pattan; One platoon- Bhimber; Two Companies Mortar Platoon - Gilgit, Ladakh.

(c) 9th J&K Infantry less two companies- Dharamsal Dhangar
one company- Chechian (5 miles SW of Mirpur)
One company- Mirpur

(d) 1st J&K Infantry less one company - Pandar
One company- Rajira.

(e) No 3 Garrison Police Company less Platoon- Mirpur
One Platoon- Poonch

The period of the calm, even though an uneasy one, was utilised by the army in patrolling, reconnaissance of new routes and up-dating of maps.

The Quit Kashmir Movement

Meanwhile the British Government, true to its promise made during the war, had set to work for the grant of independence to the Indian people. Immediately on coming to power the Labour Party in England had ordered elections in the provinces and in March 1946 it sent the famous Cabinet Mission to India for negotiating with the Indian leaders, the manner in which the transfer of power was to be made. When the Cabinet Mission made no headway in its talks with the Congress and the Muslim League leaders, because of the latter's insistance on partition and the former's opposition to it, the Mission put forward its own formula on 16th May 1946. After a careful examination of the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan, the Mission

12. Notes Brig Krishna Singh

came to the conclusion that it was not practicable to set up a sovereign Muslim state and, therefore, suggested a federal union of India with the union government having very few powers. To satisfy the League, provision was made for the grouping of provinces. With regards to the princely states, and that is what concerns us more, the Cabinet Mission made it clear that while it would not be possible for the British Government to carry out the obligation of paramountcy over such states, after a new self governing government or governments came into being in British India, the British Government could not and would not in any circumstances transfer such parmaunty to an Indian Government. The Paramountcy was to lapse on India attaining independence and the princes were to be free to decide their future.[13]

The Cabinet Mission's reference to the paramountcy issue provoked Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the leader of the National Conference in Kashmir to challenge the validity of the Treaty of Amritsar under obligation of which paramountcy was to revert to the Maharaja of Kashmir after the British departure from the Sub-Continent. With a high anti government speech at Srinagar on 15 May 1946, he launched what was termed the 'Quit Kashmir' movement. Although it was never very clear as to what exactly was the aim of the movement, the initial indications were that it was aimed at over-throwing the Maharaja. This was a total reversal of the earlier policy of the National Conference seeking a responsible government under the Majaraja as the constitutional monarch, as invisaged in the 'New Kashmir' concept of 1944. Whatever the motives, the movement was doomed to failure from the very start. The Muslim Conference came out openly against it and consequently it lacked the support of the (Indian Muslim League). What is more, the movement even failed to elicit supports of the Indian Na-tional Congress. In fact Acharya Kripalani, the Congress President, went to the extent of calling

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13. VD Mahajan India Since 1926 S Chand & Co Delhi 1969, pp 406-410
Mahammad Yusuf Saraf Kashmiris Fight for Freedom p 678

the movement a mischievous move and appealed for its immediate withdrawal.[14]

For the State Government the speeches of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah inciting people to destroy the existing government and force the Maharaja to leave Kashmir amounted to an act of treason. It acted swiftly and arrested the Sheikh at Garhi 99 miles from Srinagar on the Srinagar- Rawalpindi road as he was in the process of escaping to British India via Kohala. When the news of arrest of the Sheikh reached Srinagar some disturbances (at times communal in nature) were created by the supporters of the National Conference in the Kashmir Valley. However, in anticipation of the trouble, troops had already been moved to strategic points in Srinagar and other towns and villages in the valley. There ware some clashes between the troops and the National Conference demonstrators at Srinagar, Islamabad, and Pampur, during which the troops were compelled to open fire, resulting in six killed and ten wounded. By 1st June the movement had been contained and the troops moved back to the barracks.[15]

The State Army, (both the Hindu as well as the Muslim component), was at that time known for its loyalty to the Maharaja and it is likely that some small excesses were committed by some troops individually, but generally the conduct of the troops had been good. Never-the-less the army had to face criticism of its firm handling of the situation as normally happens in such cases. Most of this criticism was, however, based on lies that were spread by some of the National Conference leaders who had managed to escape to British India with a view to win the sympathy of the Indian people, for their cause. These people succeeded in arousing the sympathy of Pt Jawahar Lal Nehru who issued a statement (based on information supplied to him by the National Conference leaders) condemning the conduct of the troops. He alleged that

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14. Mohammad Yusuf Suraf Kashmir's Fight for Freedom p 678.

15. Note Brigadier Krishna Singh.

after the army action Srinagar had become the city of the dead and that the dead bodies were not handed over to the relatives, but were, instead soaked in petrol and burnt, while those injured were not sent to hospitals but to jails. He also alleged that the mosques including their inner shrines had been occupied by the military and the wall of the Jama Masjid in Srinagar had been knocked down to allow passage for military lorries. It must, however, got to his credit that, not caring for the ambarrasment that it caused him, he issued a fresh statement to express his regrets at having made false allegations, as soon as he realised that he had been misinformed.[16] Interestingly the allegation of troops having occupied mosques and thewall of the Jama Masjid having been knocked down by them was contradicted by the none other than the vice Presidemt of the J&K Muslim Conference (who himself was anti Maharaja and anti army) much to the embarasement of those who had made these allegations.[17]

Inspite of officially dissociating himself and the States Peoples Conference of which he was the President, from the "Quit Kashmir" movement as such, Pt Jawahar Lal Nehru decided to go to Kashmir in his personal capacity to try and secure the release of Sheikh Abdullah who was being tried for treason. The State Government on the other hand, considering that Pt Nehru had adopted a partisan attitude in favour of the National Conference, banned his entryt into the State, lest it should create a disturbance. This was not to deter Nehru and he announced his intention of forcing his entry at Kohala on 19 June 1946. One company of the Garrison Police was, consequently, despatched to Kohala to prevent his entry and also to protect him from black flag demonstrators who had planned to greet Nehru at Kohala. The orders were, that there was to be no lathi charge unless ordered by the District Magisterate, no firing unless life of men was in danger, no violence to Pt Nehru, and only the District Magisterate was to stop Nehru without using arms of any kind. Knife rests were to be laid on the road for

16. R.L. Saxena Tragedy of Kashmir pp 455-456
17. Muhammad Yusuf Saraf Kashmir's Fight for Freedom p 678.

stopping vehicles from entering the State from Rawalpindi side.[18]

Pt Nehru and party crossed the Kohala bridge in the afternoon of 19 June in four taxis. The District Magisterate rushed forward to serve notice on him, but Pt Nehru refused to go back. Instead he got off the vehicle and started advancing on foot. The black flag demonstrators had by then blocked the road and prevented Nehru's party from advancing further. They were, however, chased away by the Garrison Police men and the road was cleared. Meanwhile, Diwan Chaman Lal in order to counter the black flag demonstrators, organised the large crowd that had collected on the Indian side of the bridge into a 'Jatha' and led them into the State territory shouting anti-State slogans. They even teased and taunted the garrison police men for their loyality to the Maharaja. The policemen refused to be provoked and not being permitted to use force kept falling back from one cordon to another as the crowd advanced, while the State officials pleaded with Pt Nehru not to press his move forward. He was at least persuaded to leave the crowd and proceed to Domel in a government vehicle for talks.[19]

Meanwhile 'A' company of the 4th Battalion alongwith the Commanding Officer Lieut Colonel Narain Singh had arrived at Domel to meet any contingency that may arise. The Chief-of-Staff J&K and the Inspector General Police had also arrived and set up their headquarters here. At Domel Nehru made it clear that unless he was arrested he would not give up his march to Srinagar. He was, therefore, arrested by the District Magisterate, but with a proviso that he was under arrest only for the purpose of preventing him from going to Srinagar and that he was free to go back any time without even the formality of being released. In fact a state car was placed at his disposal for his return journey. Diwan Chaman Lal and Mr Asaf Ali who were to act

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18. Brigadier Krishna Singh, Notes
19. Ibid

as Sheikh Abdullah's defence counsel during his trial, were, however, permitted to proceed to Srinagar, while Pt Nehru remained at Domel. The British Indian authorities on their part stopped all traffic on their side of the bridge and prevented 'Jathas' from going beyond Mansehra.

On 21 June, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, the Congress President appealed to Pt Nehru to return to India for discussions in connection with the coming independence and Pt Nehrum was left with no alternative but to leave for Delhi via Kohala. He left Domel the same day in the State car under escort from the Garrison Police. Allegations of ill treatment of Pt Nehru and his party by the State troops at Kohala were again made by interested parties, but these were promptly denied by Nehru himself on his return to India.[20]

By the end of July the situation in Kashmir had returned to normal and when Nehru expressed a desire to visit Srinagar on 24 July he was permitted to do so. He was also permitted to attend the open court at Badami Bagh where Sheikh Abdullah was being tried, as his defence counsel. No one could, however, save Sheikh Abdullah from being convicted as he certainly had committed a tactical blunder in openly demanding the ouster of the Maharaja and much as he tried to wriggle out of it during his defence, the charge against him was proved and he was sentenced to three years simple imprisonment.[21]

Muslim League's Direct Action

On 29 July 1946 the Muslim League withdrew its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission proposals and decided to prepare a programme for 'Direct Action' to achieve Pakistan. The date fixed for the start of the "Direct Action" '~~Direct Action~~' was 16th August and complete lawlessness prevailed thereafter in all the Muslim majority provinces of India, lasting continuously for the next few months with only varying degrees of

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20. H L Saxena p 472
21. Ibid p 477

loot, rapine, roiting, murders and other concievable forms of violence. Consequently tension in the border areas contiguous to Punjab increased many fold. To instil confidence in the miniority community which had become panicky, the military garrisons at Bhimber and Rajouri were reinforced. The Chechian garrisons was also increased to a company strength. One more company of the 1st Battalion was inducted into Poonch and the two were now deployed one each at Rawalakot and Bagh. In October 1946 inter battalion relief took place between the 9th and the 3rd battalions, the 9th going over to Kashmir Brigade at Srinagar and the 3rd joining the Mirpur-Poonch Brigade (as the No: 3 Operational Brigade had now been redesignated)[22].

Some excitement was created in the Mirpur-Poonch area during the elections to the State Assembly in November 1946. The election campaign was used by the Muslim leadership for whipping up communal hatred, with every action of the State Government being given a communal colour. To help them in their efforts some British Officers touring the area, under the pretext of looking into thewelfare of exservicemen and carrying out recruitment, performed the role of spies and carried out anti-State propaganda.[23] Outwardly, however, the situation appeared to have quietened down at the end of November.

There was a fresh spate of loot, arson and murder in Northern India in December 1946. As a result of these roits in the trans-border area west and north-west of Muzzafarabad refugees started pouring into the State & at Muzzafarabad and by the end of the month some 1500 had entered the town. This area was then being looked after by the 8th Battalion which was deployed as under:-[24]

(a) Company less platoon at Ramkot with the task of protecting the customs post. One platoon at the Lohari-gali to block

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22. Brig Krishna Singh's Notes
23. Ibid
24. Ibid

this route of nigress and also to cover the withdrawal of the Ramkot garrison which would become necessary in case of an attack on the State from this direction.

(b) Company less platoon at Garhi to guard the route of ingress from this direction and one platoon at Dalgali to guard the customs post.

(c) One company mobile reserve to operate on the road to Ramkot.

(d) Battalion H.Q. and one company general reserve at Deomel.

(e) One garrison police company as police reserve.

After another communal clash across Kohala in the first week of January 1947, some more refugees poured in through Barsal and one platoon was located there to receive them. Two companies of the 9th Battalion were also rushed to the area as a precautionary measure. By 16th January there were about 3000 refugees in Muzaffarabad and more kept pouring in daily. These were fed and, in some cases, clothed by the State government while the Maharaja, Maharani and Yuvraj Karan Singh made liberal personal contributions towards this cause.[25]

Although the Poonch-Mirpur area remained free from major incident during December 1946 and January 1947, inspite of the large scale violence raging in the transborder areas, the situation could not have been such as to permit withdrawal of troops from the State side of the border. Never-the-less the Raghupartap were pulled out of the Mirpur-Poonch Brigade without relief and returned to the Jammu Brigade on 27th January 1947. The mistake was perhaps realised when further deterioration in the situation in Punjab and North West Frontier Province took place in the following month and a half, causing much excitment and panic in the Poonch-Mirpur area, and the Battalion was ordered back into the area in the middle of March with its headquarters again at Bandar, but with the specific operational responsibility in the Poonch area. Thereafter patrolling was

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25. Ibid

intensified all along the border with Punjab from Lachman Pattan in Palandri Tehsil through Owen, Saligram, Hil and Chechian, right through Sukhchinpur-Alibeg south of Mirpur, upto Bhimber and Manawar. The Kashmir Brigade unit in Domel/Muzaffarabad area helped with occasional patrols to the border in the Dhikot and Chirala area west of Bagh; it being easily and more conveniently approachable from Kohala side. All patrols linked with each other leaving not a bit of the border unwatched. It goes to the credit of the units of the border unwatched, Mirpur-Poonch Brigade that because of their vigorous patrolling and timely action where required, the border areas of the State remained practically quiet inspite of the large scale disturbances on the British side and the huge influx of the refugees; some of them wounded and others who had many tales of woe and misery to narrate.[26]

It appears that many a times the States Force patrols were required to co-operate with the British Indian authorities across the border. Details of such co-operation are not known accept that once during the second week of Feburary 1947, they were requistioned by the Indian side when three Sikh villages across the border west of Kohala were attacked by a mob of Muslims. The detatchment from the State side that rushed to the scene could not save the houses being set on fire but they were able to frustrate the attempt of the mob to burn the Gurudwara at Kohala, and safely escort about 150 Sikh refugees into the State. However, from the letter of appreciation from the Chief Secretary Punjab to the Resident in Kashmir some times in March/April 1947 it is evident that the State troops posted on the border rendered substantial assistance to their counterpart on the other side. The letter reads as follows:-

"The grateful thanks of the Punjab Government may please be conveyed to the Kashmir Government for the assistance rendered

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26. Ibid

by their troops and police in the British districts on the Kashmir State border during the present communal disturbances in Punjab.[27]"

By now it had ~~become~~ become obvious that the internal security role being performed by the State army was quite different in character than the term normally implies. With the border areas being infested by armed guerillas vowed to the cause of secession, the task of the army was more in the nature of a military operations. For this the army needed the co-operation of all the government agencies in the area which was not always forthcoming and very often the army had to bear the consequences of civil inaction. The subordinating of these agencies to the army was unfortunately not considered.[28]

Proposal for Construction of Roads

Military operations in the area also demanded some sort of roads and tracks in the border areas of the State which were woefully lacking till now. The Army Headquarters, therefore, put up a proposal for the following, as the army's immediate requirements:-[29]

a) Bandipore-Tragbal-Gurez pack track to be covered into a jeep track

b) Sopore- Handwara lorry road to be extended to Shardaji, Keran and Tithwal.

c) Sopore- Lolab valley lorry track to be extended upto the head of the valley.

d) Improvement of the tracks Rampur- Titiwal and Matian-Bagh.

e) For tactical reasons a track from Muzaffarabad to Garhi on the east bank of Krishen Ganga, but as far away from it as possible was urgently demanded to keep it safe from the enemy fire from the west bank.

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27. Brig Krishna Singh Notes
28. Ibid
29. Ibid

f) The track Kohala-Bagh to be converted into a jeep track.

g) A lorry/jeep/pack track to be constructed urgently from Poonch town to Hajira-Palandri to Lachhman Pattan.

h) Hajira-Rawalakot lorry track to be improved.

i) Rawalkot-Bagh track to be constructed

j) Kotli- Palandari track to be constructed

k) Kotli-Sensa track to be improved and made jeepable if possible.

l) A pack track from Rajouri to Mendhar to be constructed

m) Mirpur to be connected with Chaomukh and Mil with a pack track.

n) All tracks in Jammu-Suchetgarh-Kathua area to be made moterable.

o) Approaches to the ferry sites at Beri Pattan and Kotli to be improved and additional and larger ferryboats to be provided at both sides; at least two at each place.

Apparently the proposal was accepted but unfortunately it could not be implemented because of the events that followed.

Lull Before the Storm

Except for a few sporadic cases of incendiarism in the first week of April 1947 involving the burning of a temple in Palandri, and a Gurudwara at Mil, and some Hindu shops in Rajouri Tehsil, the situation in the Mirpur-Poonch Brigade remained peaceful and well under control of the army. As a matter of fact through active petrolling the army was able to recover a number of girls that had been abducted from the area across the border and brought into the State by the miscreants His Highness the Maharaja's visit to the area during the month also passed off without incident. In a whirl wind tour from 21 April to 25 April the Maharaja visited Bhimber, Mirpur, Jhangar, Pandor, Kotli, Hajira, Rawalkot, Poonch and Nowshare. Military pensioners including

those from the Indian army were particularly sent for at each place and the Maharaja met the retired officers and JCOs individually. The greatest gathering of exservicemen was at Rawalakot where about 600 of them in uniform were paraded before him by a retired Captain, Khan Mohammad Khan, of Palandri. The Maharaja met about 132 retired officers and JCOs here and they all assured him of their loyality.[30]

The month of May also remained peaceful but the apparent peace was perhaps the lull before the storm. The pro-Pakistan element was very active and busy subverting the loyalty of the Muslims towards the Ruler and the State. Mohd Ibrehim member State Assembly was constantly delivering fiercy speeches in Palandari, Rawalakot and Bagh in favour of Pakistan and many other prominent Muslim Conference Leaders remained busy organising party cadres.[31] There were also reports of smuggling of arms from across the border but with such a long border and so few troops to guard it, it was impossible for the army to effectively seal the border and, hard as it tried, smuggling of arms into the area went more or less unchecked. The State was aware of this short coming but there was little it could do about it. The entire State army was fully committed and it could not raise more units for want of arms and equipment; the supply of which was controll-ed by the British. The maximum it could do was to re-raise the 7th battalion and orders to this effect were issued on 29th April 1947. The class composition of the 7th battalion was this time fixed as fifty percent Gorkhas and the other fifty percent Kangra dogras. The recruitment of the Kangra Dogras was started while the Gorkha element of the battalion was provided immediately by 'milking' the Gorkha companies of the 2nd and the 3rd Battalions.[32] The 2nd J&K Rifles now moved from Jammu Cantt to Naoshera and relieved the 6th Infantry so that this complete battalion could concentrate in the Gilgit-Ladakh region with its headquarters at Bunji.

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30. Ibid
31. Brig Krishna Singh Notes.
32/33. Ibid

The Maharaja's Dilamma:

In February 1947 the British Prime Minister had made an announcement that the British would leave India by June 1948 irrespective of whether there was an agreement between the Indian political parties or not and as a follow up action Lord Luis Mountbatten replaced Lord Wavell as the Viceroy of India in March 1947. On arrival in India the new Viceroy had found the situation very critical. The Muslim League was carrying on its destructive campaign and complete chaos prevailed. Lord Mountbatten, therefore, felt that the only way out was to complete the work of the transfer of power as early as possible and much before the date stipulated by the British Prime Minister. Consequently he made emergent consultations with the Indian leaders and on 3rd June he was able to announce his plan for independence. The plan which provided for the partition of the country and the establishment of the dominions of India and Pakistan was accepted by both the Indian National Congress and the Indian Muslim League. It was given effect through the Indian Independence Act which was passed by the British parliament on 12 July 1947. The Act provided for the termination of the suzerainty of the Crown over the princely states. All treaties, agreements and functions exercisable by His Majesty with regard to these states were to lapse with effect from 15 August, which was fixed as the day of independence. The rulers of the states were given the option of joining one dominion or the other but if any one of them failed to exercise his option before 15 August he would automatically become an independent ruler of his state.

For Maharaja Hari Singh of Jammu and Kashmir the choice between his options was difficult. About 75% of the population of the State was Muslims and a large section was decidedly in favour of joining Pakistan while the rest, though not in favour of Pakistan, were for reasons of religious prejudice, not for joining the Indian dominion either, and preferred to remain independent. Interestingly the Muslim Conference

was in favour of remaining independent and it passed a resolution to this effect on 28 May 1947.[33] A majority of the Muslims of the Kashmir and Gilgit regions also belonged to the latter category. That this was so was confirmed subsequently when the Chieftans of Gilgit made it known to the Maharaja that they would remain loyal to him only so long as he joined Pakistan or remained independent.[34] It was also subsequently confirmed that Sheikh Abdulah, the Kashmiri leader preferred independence, but was prepared to join the Dominion that recognised him as the sole leader of all the Muslims in the State and offered a special status to the State to allow it to maintain as much independence as possible. The twenty five percent of Hindus were, of course, all for joining the Indian Dominion. After the people of the State witnessed the Pakistani savegry in October the scales definitely tilted in favour of the Indian dominion but as things stood in June 1947 the choice to the people seemed to lie with either joining Pakistan or remaining independent with the good will of both the dominions. As the Maharaja was averse to joining Pakistan for reasons not difficult to imagine, he seemed to have had at that time no choice other than remaining independent. He, however, seems to have at that time been aware of the problems that he would have to face if he decided to remain independent and this kept him therefore remained undecided. While he was in this frame of mind the Pakistan lobby, which interestingly included Lord Mountbatten the Viceroy of India, began to exert pressure on the Maharaja to make him decide in favour of Pakistan. The suggestion of Lord Mountbatten was obvious when he advised the Maharaja to decide in favour of one dominion or the other in keeping with the whishes of his people, while at the same time assuring him that the leaders of

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33. Muhammad Yusuf Saraf P 707
34. Brigadier Ghansar Singh, Memories p 25 and interview with the another at Jammu 1985.

the Indian Dominion would not take it as an unfriendly act were he to join Pakistan. To leave no doubt in any ones mind as to which way he wante Kashmir to go, he advised the Maharaja strongly against remaining indepe dent.[35] About the same time Mr Jinnah approached the Maharaja through General M L Scott the Chief-of-Staff of the State Force to assure him that he and his State would be guarranted the same status and conditions as those enjoyed under the suzerainty of the British Crown, if he were to join Pakistan.[36] Then ofcourse there was the pressure from the pro-Pakistan section of the Muslims which was noticeably preparing for an armed rebellion if its demand for joining Pakistan was not met. The Maharaja resisted such pressures rather stubbornly. He could not and would not throw the Hindu population to the wolves.

Pakistan being out of question and remaining independent being impractical the Maharaja certainly considered the option of joining the Indian Dominion but surprisingly no initiative in this regard was forthcoming from the Indian leaders. In fact their attitude was most discouraging. First it was conveyed to the Maharaja through Mountbatten that the new Indian Government would not consider the Maharaja's joining Pakistan as an unfriendly act and then in July when the Maharaja sent his Prime Minister to Delhi to explore the possibility of the State joining the Indian dominion, he was curtly told that India did not want the accession of the state against the will of the people.[37] Evidently this had left the Maharaja cold and dry. With this attitude of the Indian Government the Maharaja also appears to have developed apprehensions about his own future were he to join the Indian Dominion. The will of the people that the Indian leaders were hinting at was in fact the will of Sheikh Abdullah and the Maharaja probably knew full well that the Sheikh would use the undue importance that was being conferred on him (without any such provision in the Independence Act) to take revenge on him. In this Sheikh Abdullah had Nehru,

35. Alan Campbell- Johnson Mission with Mountbatten Robert Hale Ltd London 1951 pp 120-122. (36) Major General ML Scott notes (37) Alan Campbell- Johnson p 289
36. Major General H L Scott notes
37. Alan Campbell - Johnson P 289

the highest authority in India, to support him; while the Maharaja felt that the would have no supportars.

Towards the end of June 1947, the Maharaja had expressed his fears of ill treatment at the hands of the Congress rulers if he were to join the Indian Dominion, to Rai Bahadur Gopal Dass who immediately apprised Sardar Patel of the Maharaja's feelings. Sardar Patel in turn hastened to assure the Maharaja that he need have no such fears, in a letter that he wrote to him on 3rd July 1947, and thus a link between the Maharaja and the future rulers of the Indian Dominion was established for the first time.[38] Thereafter the Maharaja remained continuously in correspondence with Sardar Patel and began to show his inclination towards the Indian dominion. Mahatama Gandhi visited Kashmir on 1st August. What transpired between him and the Maharaja is not on record. Evidently he too assured the Maharaja that the Congress was not opposed to his remaining the constitutional head of the State after its accession, but insisted on Sheikh Abdullah's participation in the accession issue. The Maharaja seems to have accepted his advice. As a first step towards taking the State closer to India the Maharaja dismissed his Prime Minister Pt Ram Chand Kak who was suspected of being responsible for creating misunderstandings between him and the Congressleaders. Major General Janak Singh, long retired, was recalled and appointed the stop-gap Prime Minister of the State, while search for a permansnt successor, who could effectively negotiate with Sheikh Abdulluh was started. However, just as the reorientation of the State's new policy had begun, independence came on 15th August and in order to gain time the Maharaja ~~entered into a Stand Still agreement with both the newly created Dominions of India and Pakistan.~~ approached the newly created dominions of India and Pakistan for a Stand Still agreement with both pending his final decision. The offer was accepted by Pakistan but the Indian Union refused entertain the request on the grounds that it

~~37. Allan Campbell-Johnson p 289~~

38. Durga Das Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50 vol 1 Navjivan Publishing House Ahmedabad- 1971 pp 34-35.

was not accompanied by a similar request from the representative of the State people meaning Sheikh Abdullah who was in jail.

Take over of Gilgit[39]

With the paramountcy of the British Crown over the Jammu and Kashmir State lapsing on 15th August 1947, the lease deed between the British and the State governments, under which the former had leased out Gilgit to the later in 1936 for a period of sixty years, would have automatically become redundant with effect from that date. Consequently arrangements were made by the two governments for the proper handing/ taking over of the province (as Gilgit was to be termed henceforth) some days before independence. The day fixed was 1st August and on that day Brigadier Ghansar Singh took over charge as the Governor of Gilgit. Having been cut off from Gilgit over since 1935, when the territory was leased out to the British, the State authorities do not seem to have realised the great change that had taken place in Gilgit since the good old days. Little wonder that the trouble for the new Government in establishing his control over the Province started no sooner than the formalities of handing/taking over ceremony, such as the lowering of the Union Jack, hoisting of the State flag, the firing of the gun salutes, the playing of the National anthems and the distribution of sweets to the poor and the children were over. Brigadier Ghansar Singh had been sent to Gilgit all by himself in the hope that the lower administrative staff would automatically transfer its services from under the British to that under the State. This, however, was not to be so. During the decade or so and more of the rule over Gilgit the British had so controlled the area from the Peshawar that the staff in Gilgit had come to consider themselves as part of the North West Frontier Province administration. The matters were made worse by the British officers who, with the avowed aim of forcing the State to accede to Pakistan, had been openly instigating the staff against the State. Their hold was particularly strong command

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39. Based on Memoris of Brig Ghansar Singh pp 16-43

over the 600 strong Gilgit Scouts who were under their direct command. Consequently, while the civil employees struck work, the scouts declined to take the oath of allegiance to the Maharaja of Kashmir, pending consideration of their demands with regard to increase in pays and allowances and other terms of service. To add to the difficulties of the Governor the Political Agent had exhausted all stocks of essential commodities like cloth, kerosene, sugar etc before handing over the charge of the agency. The Governor was, therefore, up against a formidable task, right from the word go. The only consolation was that he received unreserved cooperation from the local populace including the Rajas and the Mirs who appeared to be quite happy to return to the State's fold. Their loyality to the Maharaja was, however soon subverted by the British officers and the Pakistani agents, at least to the extent that many of them were not prepared to support the Maharaja, were to join the Indian Dominion.

Apart from administration, the Governor was also responsible for the security of the Province- both internal as well as external. While the task increased in magnitude with the passage of each day, his means for acomplishing it were becoming more and more unreliable. The Gilgit Scouts whose role it was to maintain internal security, and in the event of hostilities to form the first line of defence could no longer be relied upon. Without realising that the British Officers were themselves responsible for the hostile attitude of the Gilgit Scouts, the State Government decided to retain the services of Major Brown and Captain Matheson for command of this force. They were to be assisted by Captain Mohammad Sayeed and Lieut Haider Ali of the Kashmir Army which in fact made the Scouts an unreliable out-fit all the more, all the more, unreliable out-fit. On the other hand the two Companies of 6th J&K Infantry located at Bunji and which could be used for the external and internal defence of Gilgit Gilgit happened to be Muslims, whose localities were a suspect over

since it was known that they had shouted pro-Pakistan slogans on their way up from Bandipur to Bunji. For security, therefore, the Governor had to chose between the devil and the deep sea. He and Gilgit were doomed in either case. The initiative now lay in the hands of the Pro-Pakistan element who were now waiting for an opportune moment to spell the doom.

The Drift towards the Indian Dominion

Apparently the Maharaja had now made up his mind in favour of the Indian Dominion. The only thing that was keeping him away from accession was the insistence of the Indian Government on obtaining the consent of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah towards it. On the other hand the Maharaja did not trust the Sheikh as much as the Indian Government did. Never-the-less the Maharaja had evidently yielded and was now only waiting for the appointment of a permanent Prime Minister in the State to start a dialogue on the matter with Sheikh Abdullah. Meanwhile process of the State's drift towards the Indian Dominion continued. On 23rd August the State Government made a request to the Indian Government for connecting the State with the Indian Posts and Telegraphs and also for the linking of the State with the Indian Dominion by road and air. These requests were conceded to and action to meet the State's demands was taken in hand by the Indian Government. On 13th September request was made by the State for loan of the services of Lieut Colonel Kashmir Singh Kotoch, (son of Major General Janak Singh, the State's Prime Minister) of the Indian Army to act as the Military Advisor to the Maharaja.[40] This was also granted and Colonel Katoch took over the appointment that was created after the services of Major General H L Scott were terminated on 21 Septembe The Maharaja's choice of the new Prime Minister for his State ultimately fell on Justice Mehr Chand Mahajan to the great satisfactio

40. Durga Das p 37

of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who, as the Deputy Prime Minister of India, was handling the Kashmir affair.[41] But even before Justice Mahajan could take over as the Prime Minister, the Maharaja declared general amensty on 26 September and released Sheikh Abdullah from jail after he had given a written assurance of his continued loyalty to the Maharaja.[42]

Sheikh Abdullah's release from jail did not, however, pave the way for the State's accession to the Indian Dominion as was being expected by the Indian leaders. While the Indian Prime Minister insisted that the accession, if at all, was to be with the consent of Sheikh Abdullah, the Sheikh remained uncommittal in this regard. He declared that he would join the Dominion that would recognised the soveriegnty of the people in this regard, and that he could not decide till power was transferred to him as the sole representative of the people of the State. He is even known to have approached Pakistan but with similar conditions for considering accession of the State to that Dominion but Mr Jinnah rejected both his demands of being considered the undisputed leader of all Muslims of the State as well as that of Kashmir State being granted special status as a precondition for joining Pakistan.[43] It was quite obvious that the Sheikh was for an independent Kashmir with its security guaranteed by at least one of the two dominions and the Indian Government appeared willing to accept the accession of the State on Sheikh's terms.

Pakistan, evidently, became apprehensive of the development in Kashmir, which showed the State's inclinations towards the Indian Dominion and while the haggling between the Maharaja, Sheikh Abdullah and the Indian Government were going on, it decided to take direct action against Kashmir and secure its accession by force. The Pakistani leaders backed out of the Stand Still agreement with the State and cutt off the State's supply of arms, ammunition and equipment with

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41. Ibid p 40
42. Ibid p 130
43. HL Saxena pp 492-493

while preparations were started for the conquest of Kashmir. The plan was to engineer an armed revolt in the vulnerable Mirpur-Poonch area and while the major portion of the State Army was tied up thus to storm the valley with armed raiders from the North West Frontier Province.

Revolt in Mirpur-Poonch Area

By the Middle of August 1947 the State Force had completed about one year of its arduous but successful operations in the border areas. During this period it had earned the gratitude of the State Government which was conveyed to the troops through the chief of the Army Staff in the following words :-

> "The Hon'ble Army Minister has expressed the high appreciation of His Highness' Government of the excellent work put in, and devotion to duty displayed by all ranks of the army during the past difficult year. It is mainly due to the high standard of discipline, devotion to duty and the hard work of the Officers Other Ranks, and NCsE* of the army that His Highness' Government have been able to carryout their policy of keeping the State peceful and strong." 44

After the creation of Pakistan on 14th August, however, it soon become apparent that the State Army would no longer be able to keep the State peaceful the way it had been able to do thus far. The Pro-Pakistan element which was out to creat trouble, now had the open support of the Dominion of Pakistan both moral as well as material, and they immediately got busy working up the people against the Hindus and the State Government. While processions in support of Pakistan were taken out in open defiance of Section 144, and Pakistani flags hoisted on private buildings in Poonch and Mirpur, large scale smuggling of arms and ammunition into the State was started with open connivance of the

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44. Brig Krishna Singh Notes.

* Non Combatants Enrolled

Government of Pakistan. Serving personnel of the Pakistan army belonging to this area(and they were in hundreds) were sent to their homes on leave with arms and ammunition, while they were officially shown as deserters. And all this when all further supply of arms and ammunition to the State had been cut by Ordnance Depots in Pakistan on which the State had been dependent and all of which were now in Pakistan, and Pakistan had decided not to honour her commitments in terms of the Stand Still agreement.

By the third week of August the situation in the Bagh and Rawalakot areas of Poonch from where the Pakistani's had planned to start the revolt, had become serious, necessitating the strengthening of the garrisons there. Consequently the Ist Battalion (Raghuprat p), commanded by Lt Col Kwishna Singh, which was now completely responsible for the security of Poonch, was re-deployed, and by 19 Ausust it held posts as under :-[45]

Battalion Headquarters	-Poonch
One Company	- Bagh
Two Companies	- Rawalakot
One Company	- Palandri

While the State Army was thus bracing up to meet the threat to the security of the State, thousands of refugees poured into the State, especially in Bhimber, Mirpur and Kotli areas, as a result of un-precedented violence that marked the creation of Pakistan and the partition of Punjab. This greatly added up to the responsibilities of the army. The troops helped the Hindu and Sikh refugees to cross into State territory and then escorted them to the various refugee camps within the State.

Trouble in Rawalakot and Bagh actually started on 22nd August. At Rawalakot about 2000 people held a meeting under the guidance of the Pakistani Muslim from across the border and demanded accession of the State to Pakistan. The local leaders were contacted by the

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45. Ibid

State authorities and told that no useful purpose would be served by disturbing the peace and that they could put up their demand to the Maharaja in a peaceful manner. The people agreed and dispersed peacefully. Situation in Bagh took a more serious turn that dayx when meetings were held in defiance of orders necessitating arrest of leaders, but it The situation was brought under control by the civil authorities themselves and by evening all arrested leaders were released on their tendering an apology. This was, however, not to be the end of the trouble at Bagh. Even as the authorities at Bagh were dealing with unlawful assemblies, a big congergation at Khuntal (Eastern Bagh), goaded on by a gang of Pakistanis that had entered the State for the purpose, decided to march to Poonch for putting up their demands. One thousand men started the march and spent the night at Arja where they looted shops belonging to the Hindus and Sikhs. Next day they formed themselves into three groups. One group stayed at Arja, the other moved to Hari Ghel (Junction of the Rawalakot-Bagh and Arja-Bagh routes) while the third moved to Bagh. Not being allowed to enter Bagh town, the latter spent the night a little distance away from the town and remained there throughout the 24th of August. On the 25th the group at Arja and the group at Hari Gehl also joined the up with the 'Jatta' at Bagh. The Bagh 'Jatha' was also joined by some people from local villages swelling its number to about 2000. 30 to 40 of these were armed with Rifle and fire arms while the rest carried swords, axes, lathis etc. As the 'Jatha' insisted on entering the predominently Hindu/Sikh town of Bagh the town, it was handed over to the army and the garrison at Bagh, which had by now been reinforced by a platoon under captain Balwan Singh, took charge of the situation. On being told firmly by the army that while their demands would be looked into by the Government, under no circumstances would they be allowed to enter the town, and that fire would be opened if necessary, the

agitators gradually melted away.[46]

A nasty situation at Bagh had no doubt been averted but it was now quite clear that an open armed revolt in Poonch was in the offing. The seriousness of the situation was explained to the Chief-of-staff by Colonel Krishna Singh, the Officer Commanding Raghupratap personally on telephone and the requirement for another battalion for Poonch was projected. Consequently the following measures were taken with regard to the deployment of troops.[47]

(a) One Garrison Police Company was immediately moved to Srinagar.

(b) The 9th Battalion which had recently been moved to Srinagar and stationed there as army reserve was now ordered to move to Poonch via Uri-Haji Pir.

(c) Two Gorkha companies of the newely raised 7th Battalion under Major Amarnath were ordered to move from Srinagar to Chirala (11 miles south-east of Kohala) to keep watch over the ferries over Jehlum.

(d) One company 4th J&K Infantry was located at Kohala.

(e) One platoon from the 4th Battalion moved to Chirala.

With hostiles alround the line of communications from the Battalion headquarters at Poonch to outposts had become vulnerable to sabotage. Colonel Krishna Singh, therefore, decided to set up visual signalling stations at out posts to supplement the means of communications and thus cater for line cuts and wireless failures. For this purpose signal parties were sent out from Poonch to the various posts. One such party for Bagh under Jemadar Kharud Singh arrived Rawalakot on 24th August. On the 26th August the party moved out for Bagh. When the party was about a mile and a half from Bagh Jemadar Kharud Singh was accosted

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46. Ibid

47. Ibid

by Mir Akbar, a retired Jemadar of the Indian Army, and some other local Muslims engaged the party in a friendly chat. While the attention of Kharud Singh's party was so diverted, five to six hundred men came out of their concealed postions and pounced on the signallers from the rear and captured all of them. The party was then dispossessed of its arms and ammunition and detained in a house. At sunset a Muslim farrier in the party asked his guard to be allowed to pray and on being so allowed found his opportunity to escape from hostile custody. The rest were then bound hand and foot and taken to the River Mahl for being thrown into it. In the scuffle that followed at the emmersion site, Signaller Wakil Singh and Sepoy Teja (mule driver) managed to free themselves and run away along the River. When fired at by their captors, both jumped into the River, and were carried down stream to safety. Of the other three who could not break their shackles, Mast Ram and Karnail Singh (both signallers) were drowned while Jemadar Kharud Singh got miraculously released of his bonds and was swept to the bank. ~~before being drowned~~. Getting out of the river Kharud Singh spent three nights in the jungle for ~~xrex~~ fear of being detected by hostiles till 29th August when he managed to reach Mari Gehl and there sought shelter in the house of the Sant Singh the Post Master. From here he was escorted by the locals, headed by Hassan Khan, (a retired Havildar of Kafelgarh), to Bagh on 30 August.[48]

Information regarding the incident had reached Bagh on the 26th itself and ~~thex~~ same day the garrison Commander Captain Malwan Singh sent out a rescue party of ten men under Subedar Duni Chand. When this party reached Malwani (east of Bagh) it was fired upon by the hostiles at close quarters. Naik Mahanto who was moving just behind the leading scout, engaged the hostiles courageously, but while he ~~xxw~~ was ordering his light Machine Gun group to take position he

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48. Ibid

was seriously wounded, after being hit in the head by an enemy bullet which pierced his steel helmet. Subedar Duni Chand immediately grabbed a rifle from a sepoy and shot dead the sniper who had shot Mahanto. The party could not, however, proceed further due to the superior strength of the enemy as also the fact that Mahantoo was in need of immediate medical aid. The Patrol was therefore ordered back by the Garrison Commander. Inspite of all the effort, the brave Mahanto could not be saved, and he succumbed to his injury a few minutes after he reached the hospital at Bagh.[49]

At 1600 hours that day an armed mob of about 5000 attacked Bagh from all directions. The attack was repulsed by the garrison which had taken up defensive positions all round Bagh. On 27 August the Second-in-Command of the 1st Battalion, Major Khajoor Singh, arrived at Bagh to take over command of the garrison. Next day two platoons from Bagh under Captain Balwan Singh were sent out to raid Bani Pasari, the village responsible for the Kharud Singh incident. Three mules, signal equipment and two cisterns full of petrol were recovered from one of the houses.[50]

While this action was being fought at Bagh on 26 August, the telephone line had snapped and as wireless set could not be operated due to lack of petrol for charging the batteries, the Bagh garrison had got completely cut off from the Battalion headquarters at Poonch; visual signalling having not been established yet. Subsequently Rawalakot also went out of communications, giving rise to a strong rumour that the town had been over run by the armed rebels. The rumour caused much panic among the civilians in Poonch. Luckily, however, 'A' Company of the 9th Battalion under Capt Arjan Dass arrived at Poonch from Srinagar at 0730 hours on 29th August to boost up the civilian Morale. The rest of the Battalion under Lieut Colonel Ram Lal reached Poonch a

49. Ibid

50. Ibid

little later the same day. ~~and by 1100 hours that day~~ Immediately after his arrival at Kotli Colonel Ram Lal ~~was on his way~~ proceeded to Rawalakot along with one company under Captain Prakash Chand, ~~with Lieutenant Jagdish Singh as the Company Officer~~ who took his.[51]

The company moved to Hajira in motor transport and after halting there for the night ~~at Hajira~~ advanced next day on foot, with 24 mules carrying the heavy baggage. News of the move had obviously reached the hostiles and they proceeded to destroy all the bridges enroute. This caused ~~some~~ a hindrance to the column but not such as to delay the advance ~~appreciably~~ to any great extent. No opposition was met except at Khai Gali where, true to the information provided by locals, hundreds of hostiles had taken up a defensive position to block the advance of the column. On approaching the position, two platoons under Lieut Jagdish Singh the Company Officer were pushed round the left flank, covered by 3 inch Mortar and light machine gun fire. The hostiles fired on the leading platoon and rolled down stones, but fled as the platoons charged their positions. The hostiles had created road blocks further up the track but these were not covered by fire and and the column reached Rawalakot at 8 p.m. on 29 August, to find the garrison there intact.[52]

From the beginning of September 1947 further disquietening reports regarding burning, looting, abduction and rape against the minority community by the Majority community started pouring in from all parts of Poonch. This resulted in the Sikhs and Hindus fleeing their homes and collecting around the State Force garrison and spread all over the Poonch Jagir. Evidently what was happening in the area was not totally the doing of the local Muslims. In fact many of them were against all the violence and barbarism that was taking place. Such Muslims were in fact in a fix. Their conscience did not permit them to support the Pakistani agents in their nafarious activities and yet if they acted against them, they were fearfulm of being branded as

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51. Brig Krishna Singh Notes

52. Ibid

traitors of the faith. Little wonder that even as the Hindus were pour-ing into the State from Punjab, there was constant 'Hijrat' (even though of a much lesser magnitute) of Muslims from Poonch, Bhimber and Mirpur areas to the Jehlum and Gujrat districts of Punjab, of their own free will, to avoid having to choose between loyalty to the State and that towards their faith.[53]

Realising that trouble was being fomented by infiltration of armed gangs from Pakistan and not so much by the local Muslims, the army now strove to check Pakistani infiltration into the State. The river Jehlum which formed a naturalk boundary between the state and Pakistan from Kohala in the north to Mangla in the south, was no doubt broad, deep and unfordable. However, regular ferry services used to ply at several points to facilitate movement across the border. In order, therefore, to check Pakistani infiltration into the State, it was decided to destroy all the boats that plied on the river. From 4 September onwards, any boat that came across to the eastern bank of the river was captured and destroyed after payment of compensation to the ferrymen. With the arrival of the reinforce-ments during the last week of August and the ingress of the raiders into the State having been checked fairly effectively by the destruc-tion of regular ferry services, the situation once again returned to normal and at the end of September control of the area was handed back to the civil. Rid of outside influence to some extent the local began expressing their loyalty to the State without the fear of being branded as infidels. Peace committees were formed to restore communal harmony.[53A]

Ever since after the creation of Pakistan many thousands of refugees, Hindu/Sikhs and Muslims kept pouring in daily over the southern borders of the State, from both districts allotted to Pakistan as well as from those allotted to the Indian Union after the partition of Punjab ~~and to the Indian Union respectively. These were, as they reached~~

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53. Ibid.
53A Ibid

the borders of the State, from districts allotted to Pakistan and to the Indian Union respectively. These were, as they reached the border, protected from their pursuers by the State police and the army, and after being fed and organised, escorted in safety to the destination of their choosing. Not less than twenty thousand refugees remained on the move through the State daily for many days during September 1947; safely escorted by State troops from west to east and east to west. When it is remembered how narrow the strip of the plain country between the Jammu hills and the States southern border is and that the two streams of refugees moving east and west respectively had both to pass through Kathua, it would be realised how great the task was of keeping the two streams apart and how great the credit to the civil police and the army that accomplished it. By 13 September alone, sixty thousand Hindu/Sikh and ten thousand Muslim refugees had passed through Kathua.[54]

Preparations for meeting the Invasion

Even though the army had gained reasonable control over the situation in the Mirpur-Poonch area, the Pakistani intentions of securing the accession of the State by force was quite clear by the end of September 1947. That there never was any room for complacency is evident from the note on the military situation in the State submitted to the Maharaja by the Chief-of-Staff Major General EL Scott on 22 September which reads as follows:-

"A survey of the recent tendencies and events leaves little doubt that the Muslim Conference leaders intend to push forward their policy of union of the State with Pakistan by force if necessary. It is clear that in this respect they are finding ready support and assistance in the districts of Hazara and Rawalpindi. There can be little doubt that a close alliance is intended if not already formed between the Muslim Conference leaders and the excited and fanatical agitators

54. Ibid

across the State border to the west. The recent rising in Bagh Tehsil of Poonch constitutes the first fruits of this alliance.

"On the southern border of the State the Muslims have massacred, driven out and looted the Sikhs and Hindus. The former having thus acquired a taste for massacre and loot are likely to be ready for fresh adventures. Even more dangerous than these are the many thousands of Muslim refugees that have passed into the districts of Jehlum, Gujrat and Sialkot from the east. These have lost much and no doubt are prepared to recoup themselves at the expenses of any one they are in a position to attack. Revenge and fanaticism must be equally strong motives.

"There are few indications that the Pakistan authorities are making efforts to restrain their people. In fact the contrary may be said to be true. There can be little doubt that the Pakistan police and troops are not reliable."[55]

At the end of the report the General suggested that in view of the situation then obtaining two Gorkha companies of the 7th Battalion or an equivalent detatchment from the 4th Battalion be located at Garhi or at Dujai as reserve.[56] The General algo pointed out the danger involved in the dispersal of troops on the vast frontiers of the State with no strong mobile reserve available in hand for use in an emergency, without suggesting a way for avoiding the former and creating the latter. He himself was responsible for the existing deployment of troops and probably knew too well that due to paucity of troops nothing could have been done regarding the dangers that he was pointing out.

Although General Scott had done nothing which could have been termed a disloyal act, his leanings towards Pakistan, as an Englishman ~~as a true Britisher~~, must have been all too evident to the Maharaja. If nothing else he is known to have given his tacit support to an offer of General

55. Draft Regimental History 6th Rifles produced by the Regimental Centre ~~6th~~ 1965 pp 182-183 ~~(56) Ibid~~
56. Ibid

Sir Dongl as Gracy, Chief of staff of the Pakistan Army to establish Pakistani picquets and patrols on the roads from Pakistan into the State via Domel and Islamabad in order to prevent Pakistani raiders from entering the State.[57] It is difficult to believe that General Scott did not realise that the offer was being made to facilitate the planned invasion rather than prevent it. Fortunately the Maharaja rejected the offer out of hand. Whatever the reasons, General Scott was relieved of his duties on 24 September to be sent on leave till the termination of his term on Ist November. He was succeeded by Brigadier Rajinder Singh as the new chief of the Military Staff. General ML Scott, a retired Brigadier of the Indian Army, who had been granted the rank of Major General by the Maharaja in 1946, had served the J&K State as its Chief-of-Military-Staff for nearly eleven years. This was the longest tenure as the Chief-of-Military-Staff by any officer and he could undoubtedly claim a major share of the credit for the modernisation and the high standard of efficiency that the State Force had attained uptill then. As a last act of service to the State he sent a cryptic message from Rawalpindi on his way to England stating that raiders in their thousands were being collected, armed and trained in places like Abbotabad and Nathia Gali for the last six months for an invasion of the State.[58]

The Maharaja was quite aware of the handicap that the army was suffering from even before this was pointed out by General Scott but there was little that he could do about it due to paucity of troops. The deficiency of mountain batteries which had been transferred to the Indian Army in 1942 was now greatly felt. Accordingly to General Scott the batteries were transferred to the Indian Army on the advice of the then Prime Minister of the State

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57. Maj Gen ML Scott Notes
58. Brig N.S. Rawat Notes

Gopala Swamy Iyanger even though he himself had strongly opposed it. Interestingly he ascribes a far fetched motive, bordering on being rediculous, to the State's Prime Minister m for advocating the cause of transfer of the batteries. He would have us believe that as an out and out congressman, Mr Iyanger did not want the State to have a strong army lest it should enable the Maharaja to hold out against India after independence.[59] On the other hand some old officers believe that the proposal for transfer had come from the British and the Maharaja had no choice but to accept it. Be it as it may, the fact remained that the infantry of the State Force was totally devoid of artillery cover. The other problem facing the army was ammunition. Since the stoppage of supply of ammunition from Pakistan the army had been eating into its reserves and unless the reserves were replenished immediately the State troops would soon have nothing to fight with. Consequently the Indian Government was approached for help and an indent for arms, ammunition and other military equipment which included that required for raising at least one mountain battery was sent to Delhi on Ist October 1947 through Lieut Colonel Bhagwan Singh who had been recalled to service for raising the artillery units.[60] The indent, however, got stuck up in red-tape and even after having been approved by the Home Minister and the Defence Minister the ammunition and stores could not be released before the Pakistani invasion. The State was, however, able to extract an assurance from the Government of India that some Indian military force would be concentrated at Madhopur, on the State's border with India, for rendering the State succour in case of need.

The greatest handicap from which the State Force was suffering was that the traditional loyalty of a large number of Muslim troops of the State Force towards the Maharaja could no longer be taken for

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59. Maj Gen HL Scott Notes
60. Lt Col Bhagwan Singh Political Conspiracies of Kashmir Light & Life Publishers Rohtak 1973 p 53.

granted under the changed circumstances. This limitation does not seem to have been realised. In fact implicit faith in the loyality of Muslims formed the basis of the deployment of units to meet the fast developing threat from across the border with Pakistan. The 4th Battalion with 50% muslims in its ranks was deployed in the vital Muzaffarabad Kohala sector while the 6th Battalion, another battalion with 50% mulsims, was allowed to relieve the all Hindu 5th Battalion in Gilgit-Ladakh sector. Even the pro-Pakistan slogans that the Muslim companies of the 6th Battalion raised on their way from Bandipo -pore to Bumji does not seem to have aroused the suspicions of the militaty authorities to any great extent.[61] Of course today with the advantage of the hind sight it may appear that the trust in the Muslim troops was misplaced but at that time the results must have been difficult to foresee. These very troops had remained most steadfast in their loyality to the Ruler while they handled the anti Maharaja agitations by their co-religionists. The 4th Battalion had perhaps the best record of the Hindu-Muslim unity among all ranks. Besides having fought shoulder to shoulder against the Japanese, the Hindus and Muslims of this Battalion had set a unique example of eating from one langer, food cooked by a team of cooks belonging to both the communities.[62] In fact their Commanding Officer Lieut Colonel Narain Singh Sambyal had sworn by his muslim troops when the Maharaja had asked him to report on their loyality some days before the invasion in his sector of responsibility.[63] Strange, however, are the ways of communal fanaticism, which, even today, we perhaps understand only a shade better than what we did in those days.

Soon after taking overas the Chief of the Military Staff Brigadier Rajinder Singh issued orders for the evacuation of all

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61. Brig Ghansar Singh Memoirs pp 23-24
62. Major General ML Scott notes.
63. Draft Regimental History J&K Rifles p 222.

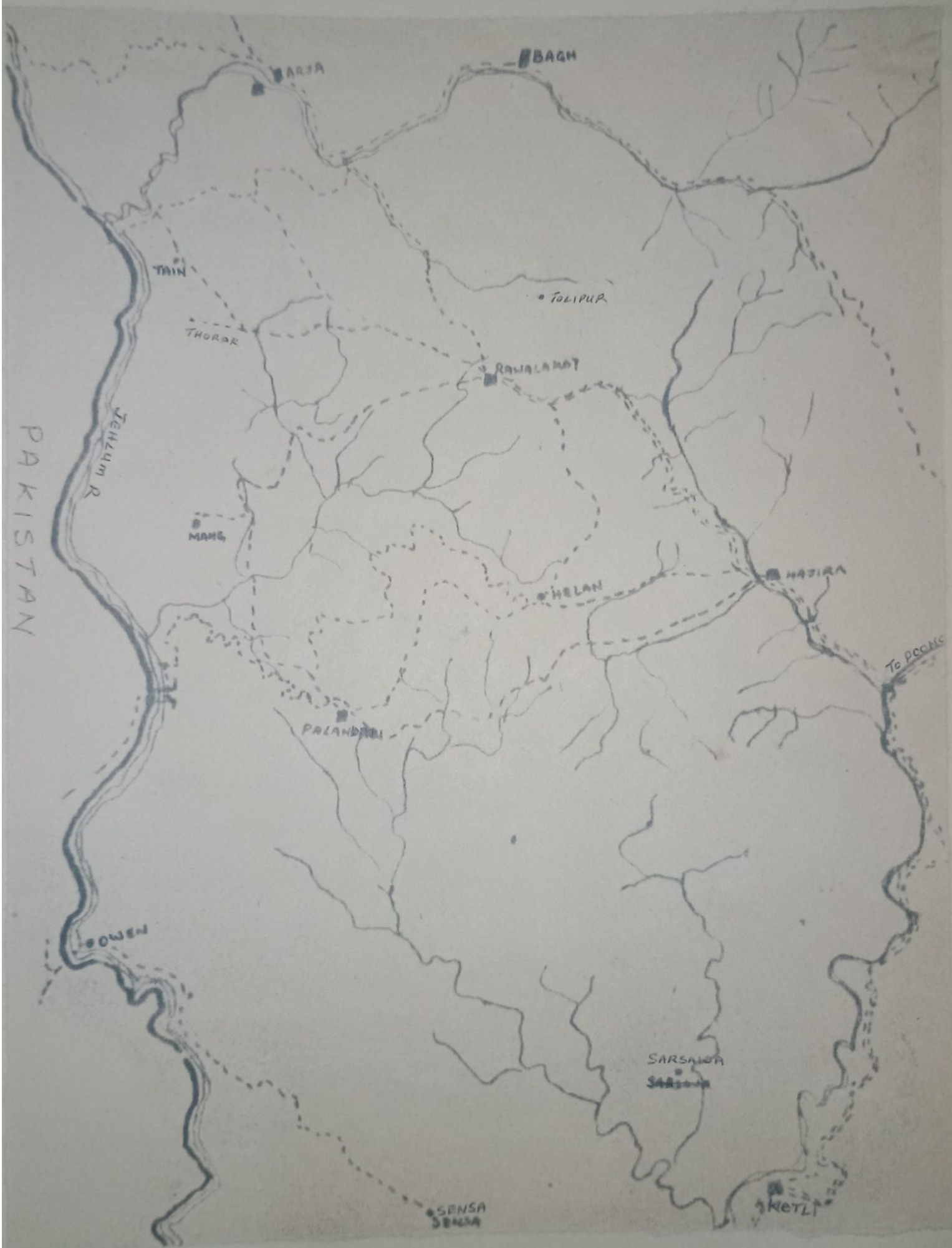
civilians living three miles of the border to camps which were to be set up for the purpose deeper in the State territory. Orders were also issued to troops for forming strong bases rather than remaining deployed in penny packets. As such the troops in the Mirpur-Poonch area were asked to concentrate in Bagh, Rawalakot, Poonch, Kotli, Mirpur Jhanger and Nowshera.[64] As it was felt that the Ist Battalion had remained too long in action a relief programme between the Ist and the 8th Battalions was arranged. In fact by the end of September one company of the ~~1st~~ 8th had already arrived at Lachhman Pattan in Poonch and the relieved company of the Ist was in the process of moving to Srinagar; which it eventually did on 2 October.

Pakistani Offensive in the Poonch Sector

Even as these orders were being implemented Pakistan struck its first blow in Poonch on 01 October and heavily attacked the small State Force garrisons at Thorar, Tai and Mang. A column of three companies two of the 9th battalion and one of the 8th (newly arrived as part of relief programme) all under ~~Major Amar Nath Lakhanpal~~ Lieut Colonel Ram Lal was immediately rushed from Rawalakot to reinforce the three out posts under seige of Pakistani irregulars. The main pressure was on Thorar and the enemy had occupied all approaches to the picquet to prevent it from being reinforced. After some sharp fighting in which heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy, the column broke through the cordon and Thorar was relieved. Tain and Mang were also similarly relieved. In view of the orders of the Chief-of-Staff against the deployment of troops in penny pockets, there was no requirement for these posts to hold out against the enemy, as they did, but the garrisons at these places were burdened with the moral responsibility of protecting Hindu and Sikh refugees who had taken shelter in these posts. The garrisons had, therefore, held out for eighteen hours

64. Lt Col Puran Singh Sambyal notes.

THE POONCH SECTOR



without food and water and had suffered six killed and 27 wounded before being relieved. The column now returned to Rawalakot alongwith the men of the relieved garrisons and about 4000 refugees who were subsequently escorted further back to Hajira.[65]

Simultaneous to the attack on Thorar, Tai and Mang the Pakistani had also attacked Chirela which was held by the two Gorkha companies of the 7th Battalion. Captain Dalbir Singh and Captain Lachman Dass, the two company commanders at Chirela, reported being encircled by over-whelming numbers of the enemy and requested for immediate reinforcements. The enemy was reported to be subjecting the post to continuous 3 inch motar and Medium Machine Gun fire and in view of the dwindling stocks of ammunition the companies were not in a position to hold out too long. Consequently a column under Lieut Colonel Maluk Singh consisting of two companies of the 8th battalion, one section of 3 inch mortars and another of the Medium Machine Guns was despatched from Srinagar to Chirela on the 3rd October. The column reached Domel the next day and leaving behind an MMG detachment and one platoon of 'C' Company at Domel, due to shortage of transport, moved on to Kohala the same day. Enemy opposition was first encountered when the column had advanced about 8 miles from Kohala on its way to Chirela. Thereafter almost every ridge, hill top, and track bend was found held by the enemy. The enemy offered stiff resistance at every position occupied by him but was dislodged from all his positions one by one till the column reached Kunthal, some three miles from Chirala. Kunthal was the headquarters of the enemy in the area and was strongly held. Here Colonel Maluk Singh had to launch a regular attack to force the enemy out of his position. The column finally reached Chirala on 7 October much to the relief of the garrison, which was by now at its tethers end.[66]

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65. Draft Regimental History J&K Rifles p 184
66. Ibid pp 184-185

As it had already been decided to withdraw the Chirala companies to Nagh, they joined Colonel Maluk Singh's column which left Chirala for Nagh on 11 October along with the refugees. Right from Chirala to Riavala the move of the column was shadowed by the enemy, causing continued harrasment all the way. This and the added responsibility of the protection of the refugees had greatly slowed down the advance of the column to Riavala. After Riavla the column was able to give a slip to the enemy when, guided by some locals, it took an unsual route to Arja and thus escaped harrassment along this stretch. Knowing that the column had to in any case pass through Arja for reaching Nagh, the enemy had taken up a well dug defensive positi-on here, to block its advance. On reaching Arja the column made a spirited attack and forced the enemy to abandon his positions and flee Captain Mahatam Singh, Jamadar Arjun Singh and four other Ranks were wounded during the fighting but the way was now clear and the column reached Nagh on 13 October. It had brought with it 200 refugees, some of whom it had collected enroute. On arrival of these four additional companies at Nagh, one company of the 8th Battalion and one of the 1st were despatched to Rawalakot to reinforce the garrison there.[67]

Formation of the Poonch Brigade

After these Pakistani attackes on 1st October, all troops in the Poonch area were organised into a Brigade, (with effect from 2 October) which was designated as the Poonch Brigade. Consequently the Mirpur-Poonch Brigade at Jhangar was now redesignated as just Mirpur Brigade. Lieut Colonel Krishana Singh was promoted Brigadier and given command of the new Brigade while Lieut Colonel Hira Nand took over the command of the 1st Battalion. The relief programme between the ~~Pakistanx~~ 1st and the 8th Battalions was now halted and latter was made the additional battalion of the Poonch Brigade. By the middle of October all the out lying posts had been withdrawn and the

67. Ibid pp 186

troops of the Poonch Brigade were now concentrated mainly at Bagh Mawalakot and Poonch.

Offensive in the Mirpur Brigade Sector

The main enemy offensive in the Mirpur Brigade sector was launched on 8/9 October night. The detailed dispositions of the two Battalions, the 2nd and the 3rd, and the Squadron of the Body Guard Cavalary under the Brigade were as under :-[68]

(a) Along the Jhelum River

i)	Owen Pattan	- one platoons 2nd Rifles.
ii)	Sensa	- company less two platoons 2nd Rifle
iii)	Saligram	- one platoon 2nd Rifles
iv)	Hill Begaum	- company less platoon 3rd Rifles
v)	Mangla fort	- one platoon 3rd Rifles
vi)	Chechian	- company less platoon 3rd Rifles

(b) Along Chechian-Bhimber Road

i)	Jatley Alibeg	- one platoon 3rd Rifles
ii)	Bhimber	- one squadron cavalry less two troops
iii)	Padar Fort	- one troops cavalry
iv)	Munawar	- one trbop cavalry

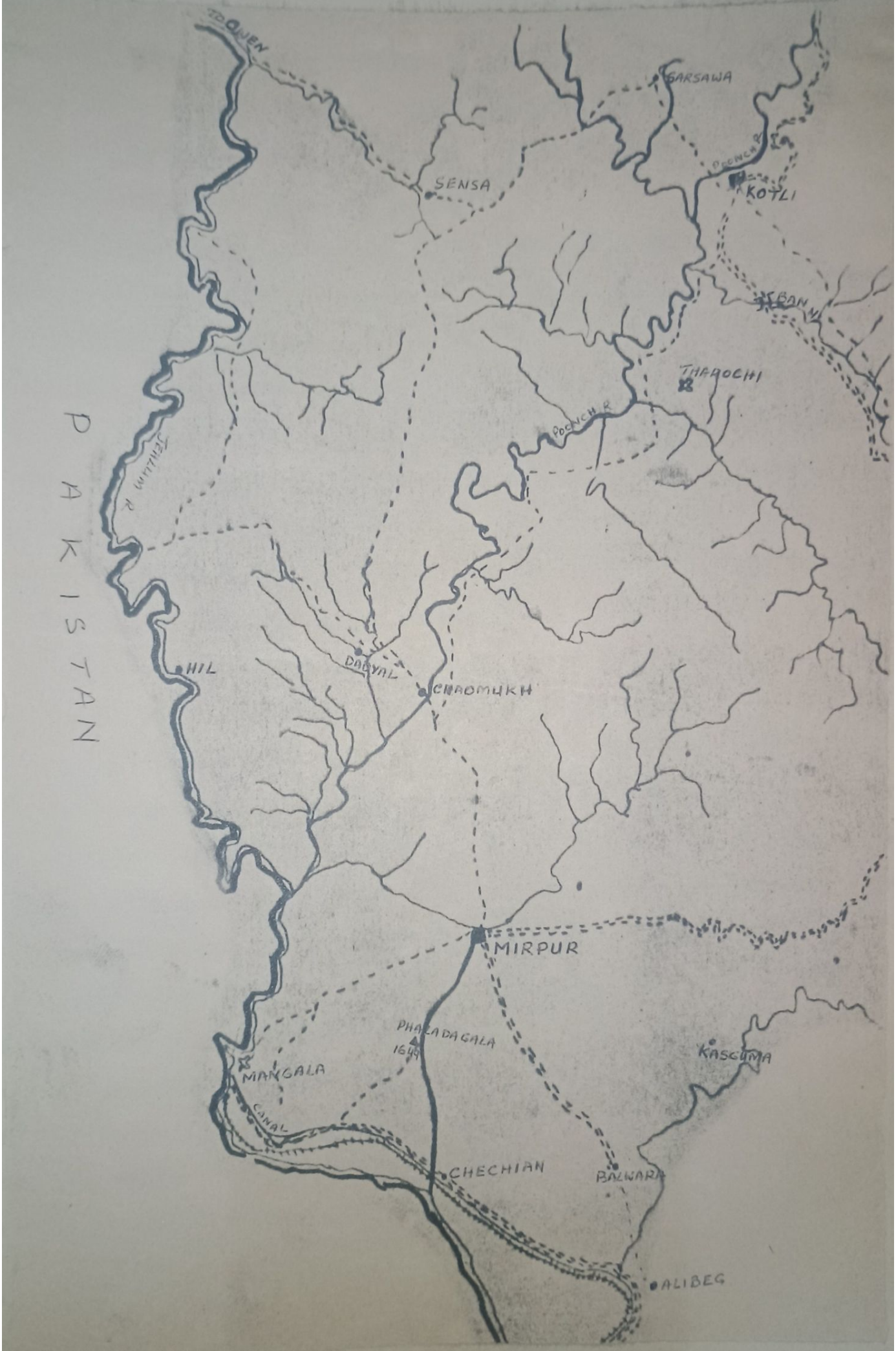
(c) District and Tehsil Garrisons

i)	Mirpur	-3rd Rifles less two companies
ii)	Naoshera	-2nd Rifles less three companies
iii)	Rajauri	-one company 2nd Rifles
iv)	Kotli	-one coy less one platoon 2nd Rifles
v)	Ban Brigade (Ban bridge)	-one platoon 2nd Rifles
vi)	Dadyal-Chomukh ferry	-one platoon 3rd Rifles
vii)	Jhangar	-HQ Mirpur Brigade and two platoons -one from each battalion.

The first position to be attached was Owen Pattan which was held by a platoonm of the 2nd Battalion under Subedar Dhan Bahadur

68. Brigadier Chuttar Singh Notes.

THE MIRPUR SECTOR



Apparently orders had already been issued to Subedar Dhan Bahadur to withdraw from his post to Sensa but before he could do it both his positions at Owen Pattan and Deyur Ridge were attacked by the enemy in large numbers on 8/9 October night. Both the posts fought gallantly but were overwhelmed by superior numbers and most of the Gorkhas were either killed or taken prisoneer.[69]

Information regarding the enemy attack on Owen Pattan reached Kotli on the morning of 9 October. One platoon under Captain Mohammad Hussain was ordered to proceed to Sensa, and after contacting Lieut Raghubir Singh Thappa, the company commander there, to push forward to Owen Pattan. Captain Hussain reached Sensa in the evening and found the Sensa company surrounded by the enemy. He managed to join up with Lieut Raghubir Singh but the enemy pressure was too much for the Sensa garrison, even after it had been so reinforced, and the next day it was forced to withdraw to Tharochi fort.[70]

A strong rescue column of two companies of the 2nd Battalion under the Commanding Officer, Lieut Colonel Abdul Hamid Khan, was now sent out, early morning on 10 October, to recapture Sensa and then push on to Owen Pattan. The column was accompanied by many Hindu/Sikh refugees from Sensa in the hope of recovering their lost property. The column met with some opposition on the way but it was easily over come and it reached Sensa the same day. Here the enemy was found to be occupying the Dak Bunglow area with a Pakistani flag hoisted on the main building. Colonel Hamid Khan immediately launched an attack and drove the enemy out of Sensa. To every ones joy some Gorkhas of the Owen garrison, who were being held as prisoners at Sensa, got freed during the attack and joined the rescue column. The column then advanced towards Owen but it found its way blocked by a very much

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69. Ibid

70. Ibid

reinforced enemy. Not only was an advance to Owen not possible but the column also found it difficult to hold on to Sensa, and two days later colonel Hamid was forced to fall back on Tharochi. The enemy followed the column at its heals and no sooner had it entered the fort, than the garrison was attacked in great strength. The attack was successfully repulsed but the next day Colonel Hamid decided in favour of abandoning the fort and withdrawing further back. This was not acceptable to Brigadier Chattar Singh, and he ordered the recapture of the Tharochi fort. By this time Colonel Hamid Khan having fallen sick had been evacuated to Naoshera and the command of the column had devolved on Captain Rahmat Ullah Khan. In compliance of orders the fort was recaptured on the 18th of October and on 21 October the column left for Jhangar; leaving the two Gorkha platoons under Lieut Raghubir Singh in occupation of the fort. The column, however, heavily engaged by the enemy at Juna (15 miles west of Jhangar) and could not reach Jhangar as required.[71]

Meanwhile Kotli was seriously threatened. The fall of Owen Pattan had left Kotli exposed and an enemy attack on it could be expected any day. Consequently a platoon of the 3rd Battalion under Lieut Ishri Singh was despatched from Mirpur to reinforce the garrison at Kotli. This platoon was ambushed by the enemy in Rangar Nala just 4 miles west of Kotli on 14 October and of the 30 odd men in the platoon only Lieut Ishri Singh and one or two other Ranks escaped to be able to tell the tale. Obviously the threat to Kotli was even more serious than had been realised.

The Commander Mirpur Brigade, Brigadier Chattar Singh, was at Mirpur when the news of the ambush reached him. Since there were no more troops at Jhangar to reinforce Kotli, which was then being garrisoned by just one Muslim company of the 2nd Battalion,

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71. Ibid

the Commander sent an urgent message to Army Headquarters Srinagar requesting for additional troops for the defence of kotli. Meanwhile he collected one 3 inch Mortar detachment and a section of medium machine guns from the 3rd Battalion at Mirpur and rushed to Kotli just in time to prevent the enemy from entering the town. There was at that time complete panic in Kotli as the Hindus and Sikhs were preparing to leave the town. The arrival of the Brigade Commander and the defence weapons restored confidence and order among the civilians. The Army Headquarters on its part ordered two companies of the 9th Battalion under Lieut Colonel Shiv Ram (who was in the process of taking over the Battalion from Lieut Colonel Ram Lal) to move from Rajira to Kotli. Starting on the 16th the companies reached Kotli on 17 October after a forced march of 35 miles. The companies had, of necessity to move light and they arrived with just ~~their~~ the company weapons, a limited quantity of ammunition, and without the men's bedding. Never-the-less, immediately on arrival the companies were ordered to attack and dislodge the enemy at Ranger Nala. ~~While on their way the companies were heavily engaged by the enemy at Ranger Nala.~~ While on their way, the companies were heavily engaged by the enemy in a battle across the Poonch river and despite repeated attacks on the enemy, ~~they were unable to~~ that had their blocking they could not dislodge him ~~and were, therefore, unable to reach their objective.~~ to be able to proceed further Obviously the enemy was too strong for two companies and they withdrew to Kotli after suffering four killed. Here they took up positions for the defence of Kotli, on which an attack could now be expected any time.[71A]

Inspite of the failure on the part of the newly arrived troops to dislodge the enemy from surrounding areas, their arrival was a source of great joy for the Hindus and Sikhs of the town. Even Hindus from surrounding areas now started collecting at Kotli,

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71A ~~Ibid~~
~~71-A~~ Ibid

considering it to be a safe place. Lieut Colonel Shiv Ram took over command of the garrison and organised the defences into two sectors. The Tehsil area formed no I sector and was allotted to 'B' Company under Captain Arjun Dass while No. 2 sector covered the town and was allotted to 'A' Company under Captain Ram Parkash. One of the platoons of the Muslim company of the 2nd Battalion was deployed on a tactical feature,(one and a half miles from Kotli), called Mandi.[72]

In response to the frantic messages that were being sent to it by the Mirpur Brigade, the Army Headquarters, besides ordering the reinforcements of two companies, had also despatched some old muzzle loading rifles that were lying in the Military Stores and these arrived at Kotli on the same day as the two companies of the 9th Battalion. Some Hindu and Sikh civilians were organised into two platoons and these weapons were issued to them for looking after Seri and Khamba areas. Two days later the Revenue Minister Colonel Baldev Singh Pathania also arrived at Kotli on a tour. By that time the enemy had occupied all the hill features dominating the town and started occasional snipping into the town. Seeing the Kotli garrison in such a desperate situation, the soldier in Colonel Pathania got the better of him and he decided to stay on with the garrison during its hour of trial. It was fortunate that he decided to do so. For when the battle for Kotli actually started he proved to be the mainstay of the morale of the garrison and the civilians; as he moved from post to post in the thick of battle ignoring his own wound which he received during the fighting. Indeed it was mainly his dauntless courage and devotion to duty that inspired the garrison to withstand the numerous murderous assaults that the enemy launched all through the next month or so.[73]

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72. Major Ram Prakash, an account of the Seige of Kotli.
73. Draft Regimental History p 202.

Attack on Rawalakot

After two companies of the 9th Battalion had left Rawalakot for Kotli the enemy found it opportune to attack Rawalakot in strength. The attack supported by mortars, medium machine guns and light automatics was launched on 19/20 October night. It was, however, beaten back with heavy losses to the enemy. In the morning the whole area infront of the defended localities was seen littered with the enemy dead; many still clutching their rifles. All these rifles were duly collected by the garrison to replenish its own stocks. Thereafter the enemy maintained a respectable distance and contended himself with day and night sniping from their.[74]

Visit of the Maharaja

Maharaja Hari Singh as the Commander-in-Chief of the State Army made yet another tour of the Mirpur Sector from 20 to 21 October to apprise himself of the serious situation that had developed in this sector as a result of Pakistani attacks. He was accompanied by his new Prime Minister Shri Mehr Chand Mahajan.[75]

Raids in the Jammu Sector

Simultaneous to their offensive in the Poonch and Mirpur sectors in early October, the Pakistanis had launched their offensive on the southern borders of Jammu, right from Kathua in the east to Akhnoor in the west. The dispositions of the units of the Jammu Brigade commanded by Brigadier Khuda Baksh, was as under :-

Brigade Headquarters	-	Jammu Cantt
J&K Training Centre	-	-do-
5th J&K Light Infantry	-	Spread in sub units from Kathua to Bhimber.
4th Garrison police companies	-	-do-

The Pakistani offensive opened on the night of 8/9 October with an attack on Babiya post held by a weak platoon of the 5th Light Infantry. The enemy was a company strong but the platoon gave a three hours battle to the enemy before being forced to fall back. Next morning a counter

74. Draft Regimental History pp 188
75. Mehr Chand Mahajan Looking Back, Bombay 1963

attack by one company of the 5th Battalion was put in and the intruders were driven back after a servere hand to hand fight.

In the middle of October the platoon post at Devigarh was besieged by about five hundred Pakistanis armed with bren guns and light automatics. The post was then subjected to a series of attacks, each one of which was successfully repulsed. Indeed the enemy's last attack, in which he was able to penetrate the defences, had created a critical situation but fortunately reinforcements in the form of a company from Arnia had arrived in the nick of time to avert a near catastrophe. The relieving company had attacked the enemy in his rear which forced him to call off his attack and flee to safety. Thereafter the Pakistani offensive in this sector, covering over a hundred miles of the border, remained confined to raids rather than well conceived and planned attacks. The raids followed a set pattern. The raiders well armed with bren guns and light automatics, intruded inside the State territory upto a depth of five to ten miles at odd hours. During the raids they would raise loud battle cries, fire tracer ammunition indiscriminately, burn villages enroute, kill as many of their inhabitants as they possible could, left cattle and other booty and then hurriedly retreat into Pakistan before the arrival of the State troops. For its defence this portion of the frontier was divided into three sub sectors, namely Uth- Miramagar- Ramgarh- Babiya and Rambir Singh Pura- Akhmoor each under the charge of a rifle company. A company each of the Garrison Police was stationed at Kathua and Ramgarh and a company of recruits with less than six months service from the Training Centre was located at Suchet Garh on the Jammu- Sialkot road while the Cavalry, split up among the various sectors, provided the sector commanders with mobile reserves. Even then it was impossible for the troops to prevent raids by Pakistanis who held the initiative by being able to choose their places and timings of raids along the hundred mile long border.[76] Brigadier NS Rawat took over command of Jammu Brigade with effect from 17 October 1947.[77]

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76. Draft Regimental History pp 218-219
77. Brig NS Rawat Notes

The Invasion of Kashmir[78]

The operational situation was bad enough in the Poonch, Mirpur and Jammu sectors during the third week of October but worst was to follow in the Muzaffarabad sector.

The town of Muzaffarabad was at that time the headquarters of the district of the same name. It is situated on the right bank of River Jehlum adjacent to the border with Pakistan. Opposite to it on the left bank of the River is situated Domel through which passes the Rawalpindi-Srinagar Road. Domel is linked with Muzaffarabad to Lahargali, Ramkot and thence to Mansehra and Abbottabad in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. The other road linking the State with Pakistan was, of course, the Rawalpindi-Srinagar road which crossed into the State territory over the Kohala bridge. There was an important customs check post at Domel which yielded a revenue of nearly Rs. 30,000/- a day to the State- such was the importance of this link with Pakistan.

The 4th J&K Infantry (Fateh Shivji) of the World War II fame and known to be the oldest Battalion of the State Force was deployed in this sector to guard these enterances on the border with Pakistan. The Battalion was also made responsible for keeping vigil along the Krishenganga river, right upto Tithwal and Keran. With these tasks in view the Battalion was disposed as under :-

(a) Battalion Headquarters less three companies plus one platoon B Company		- Domel
(b) 'A' Company (Hindu) and det 3 inch Morter		- Kohala- Barsala
(c) 'C' Company (Muslim)	less platoon	- Lohargali
	one platoon	- Ramkot
(d) 'B' Company (Hindu)	less two platoons	- Kupwara
	one platoon	- Keram
(e) 'D' Company (Muslim)	less two platoons	- Domel
	one platoon	- Sarhi
	one platoon	- Dhub
(f) One Platoon (Hindu) HQ Company		- Battika

Besides the above there was a section of Medium Machine Guns of 8th J&K (which the Battalion had left behind on its way to Chirala

78. Based on Draft Regimental History pp 221-229

due to lack of transport), at Mazaffarabad, and a platoon of Garrison Police Company (Muslim) at Tithwal.

By the 15th of October 1947, many Hindu and Sikh refugees from the North West Frontier Province had entered Muzaffarabad. These refugees had brought information that the Pakistan authorities had collected a large force of tribals mainly Afridis and Waziris, numbering about six thousand men in the area of Abbottabad- Mansehra with the avowed intention of invading the State and going straight for Srinagar along the Domel- Srinagar axis. On inquiries being made from the forward troops at Ramkot and Lohargali, to ascertain the veracity of the reports, the Commanding Officer Col Narain Singh was assured that the talk of an invasion by the tribals was merely a rumour with no authentic base. Nevertheless the State authorities could not have been lulled by such assurances as information about the impending invasion had been trickling into the State by other sources as well. The first authentic report had in fact reached them in the first week of October through the government of India who had forwarded the report of the Deputy Commissioner of Dera Ismail Khan, which he had submitted on arrival at Delhi on leave. Dewan Shiv Charan Lal in his report had clearly indicated the impending invasion by the tribals and the complicity of the Pakistan Government in the Scheme.[79] Apparently the Maharaja was aware of such a plan even earlier than this but was confident that the troops would be able to meet the threat once the arms, ammunition and equipment, promised by the Indian Union, was received. Plans had been prepared for the demolition of the Kohala bridge and portion of the Muzafarabad- Mansehra road to make them unusable by invaders but the authorities were waiting for the arrival of the required explosive which had been indented for from India. The issue of accession to the Indian union, which was now the only

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79. Durga Das p 50

solution to the problem of security of the State, continued to be obstructred by the rigid postures adopted by the Indian Government, Sheikh Abdullah and the Maharaja. While the Indian Government insisted that the accession was to be only with Sheikh's consent[80], the latter insisted that he could not commit himself till power was transferred to him.[81] The Maharaja on the other hand was not prepared to transfer power to Sheikh Abdullah before accession, probably for two reasons. One that the situation on the borders did not permit transfer of power at that stage and, two, that there was no gaurantee that the Sheikh would opt for India after the power was transferred to him.[82] The Indian Government could have atleast supported the State with the arms, ammunition and equipment to be able to meet the threat that was building up but even this was not to be; not because of any matter of policy but because no one could push through the State ~~independence~~ indent fast enough. Be it as it may the Maharaja was left with no option but to face the situation on his own. The situation was not totally desperate. He was confident that his army would be abe able to halt the invasion at least to give him enough time to get his other options into play. The question of loyalty of his Muslim troops did cross his mind and he is believed to have specifically asked Colonel Narain Singh ~~xxxhis~~ as to how he felt about his Muslim troops. Colonel Narain Singh ~~xxxtoxhow~~ on his part had full (nay blind) faith in his troops, as any good commander would. The Maharaja's suspicious were further lulled by the fact that his Muslim troops were already fighting the pakistanis in the Mirpur area, none too badly. In any case mistrust at this stage could have precipitated matters. So the matter was allowed to lie as it was in the hope that faith would beget ~~a~~ faith. Unfortunately this was not to be

80. Ibid pp 45-47
81. Ibid pp 54-55
82. H L Saxena p 491.

On the fateful night of 21st/22nd October 1947 the Muslim element of the 4th Battalion at Lohargali and Rumkot, swept by religious fanaticism, forgot their oath of loyalty towards their Ruler and the State, joined hands with the enemy and led him to pre-arranged positions in the area around Muzaffarabad and Domel in what was to become, perhaps, the most treacherous and dastardly act in the annals of military history. Then before it was twilight, over five thousand tribesmen, stiffened by the regulars from the Pakistan Army, fully armed with modern weapons, and mostly led by Pakistani Officers, stormed the sleeping city of Muzaffarabad. In a couple of hours that followd, hell was let lose in the city transport arson loot, massacre, rape and every thing else that may be expected of barbarians. The whole town was set ablaze while the mild drizzle that started in the early hous of the morning did little to extenguish the fires. Simultaneously the raiders, guided by the traitors of the State army, moved out to liquidate the posts of the 4th Battalion that were holding out. They naturally knew the strength and location of the various posts manned by the loyal elements and therefore sufficient force was allotted for over-whelming each.

The machine gun section of the 8th Battalion under Havildar Bishan Singh which was located on a high ground in the school area north of the city was, naturally, the principle target of the raiders. This post was heavily invested from all sides and subjected to incessant fire including shelling by mortars but this could not stop the guns from firing effectively into the enemy. The fighting continued the whole day but as the ammunition stock of the section st started getting exausted, Havildar Bishan Singh and his section stealthily slipped out of the post into the hills during the night taking with him a large number of civilians who had escaped the clutches of the marauding hoards and take shelter in the post. The section man-handled the guns, carrying them over the mountains and

passes (including the 10,264 feet high Nathi Chhana Gali) and after marching for days without food and rest reached Srinagar via Kandwara.

In the early hours of 22nd October a wounded Sikh had sneaked through the enemy at Muzaffarabad and reached Domel to inform the garrison there of the invasion but the enemy had followed close at his heals and before he could be questioned, the Domel garrison had been attacked. The personnel in the camp immediately took up positions but most of them were unarmed; their arms lying locked up in the 'Kot' at the Quarter Guard. Knowing this the enemy trained his medium machine gun on the Quarter Guard and prevented the men from getting to their weapons. Four men had already been killed while trying to reach the 'Kot' when the Adjutant, Captain Ram Singh, made an attempt himself. He too was hit in the leg and as he persisted in his effort to crawl forward he received a burst in the stomach which made it impossible for him to proceed any further. Havildar Ashraf then rushed forward and dragged Captain Ram Singh to suitable cover, where he bandaged his wounds. Unfortunately this brave act of Ashraf could not save the life of his officer.

While the little town of Domel was burning and meeting the same fate as Muzaffarbad, the garrison at Domel was holding out stubornly with whatever weapons the men had been able to lay their hands on. The mortar platoon less a section was in action throughout the day. But it was an uneven fight and by night fall the garrison had got decimated to just fifteen men including the Commanding Officer Colonel Narain Singh. Not prepared to surrender, these brave men took advantage of the darkness to escape from Domel and take to the hills. The fate that befell Colonel Narain Singh's party will never be known as none survived to tell th story.

There was a post at Battikaa which was held by a platoon

under Subdedar Hukma Singh. On 23rd October at about 8 p.m. this post was attacked by the enemy in their hundreds. The first attack which was supported by 3 inch mortars was repulsed and so were the others, that followed one after the other, forcing the enemy to retire into the hills. The action had, however, exausted the limited amount of ammunition at the post and realising that his men would not be able to hold out against another attack, Subedar Hukm- Singh quietly abandoned the post while the enemy was still licking his wounds and led his platoon towards Muzaffarabad. Unfortunately a Muslim signaller sepoy Lal Din deserted the platoon during the withdrawal and informed the enemy about the desparate situation that the platoon was in, with regards to its ammunition stocks. This information put life into the enemy and the platoon was attacked while it was passing through Hili Dandi. It was not long before the men of the platoon fired off their last round and they were all captured. The men were then disarmed, stripped naked leaving only an undergarment on, and led to the river bank near Chall where they were lined up and shot dead. Of the total strength of twenty two only one sepoy, Sansar Singh, escaped to narrate the tragic story. Sansar Singh had jumped into the fast flowing river while he was in the process of being shot and was carried downstream onto the far bank to safety.

There was a section post at Kotli (not to be confused with Kotli in the Mirpur district) commanded by Naik Sant Ram. On hearing the firing at Muzaffarabad and Domel on 22 October, Sant Ram tried to established contact with the Battalion Headquarters at Domel. There was naturally no response but Sant Ram guessed what might have happened, as he could clearly see the city of Muzaffarabad in flames. He collected the Sikh and Hindu civilians who had been earlier issued with muzzle loaders for self defence and putting three armed civilians

with one regular soldier in each trench, he prepared to meet the enemy attack, which he realised could not be long in coming. The enemy finally attacked the post at about 8 p.m. on 22 October in over whelming numbers, amidst shouts of Pakistan Zindabad. The section held out for three hours but as it started running out of ammunition Sant Ram decided to withdraw. The civilians in the area were not forgotten, and the section was first moved to the area of the Gurudwara for keeping the enemy at bay while unarmed men, women and children crossed over the suspension bridge over the Jehlum river to safety. The armed civilians crossed next and Sant Ram's men last but in time to pull down the bridge before the enemy could set foot on it. The tunnel on the Domel Kohala road was reached late in the afternoon next day and here they were joined by about 500 refugees who had managed to escape from the hands of the ostentatiously barbaric enemy. Leaving the section in the tunnel for the protection of the refugees, Sant Ram, with one sepoy, set out for Domel to establish contact with the Battalion Headquarters. However, when he saw the Sikh village of Chattar, enroute, in flames he returned to his section and decided to withdraw alongwith the refugees to Garhi. The column marched all night across country over the hills and through pine forests and reached Garhi on the Kohala-Srinagar road at 2 a.m. next day. There were some civilian vehicles at Garhi at that time and the refugees were evacuated in them, to Uri. Sant Ram was unaware of the exact operational situation and decided to continue his withdrawal to Uri. He had hardly marched three miles from Garhi where he was met by Brigadier Rajinder Singh who was proceeding post haste to Domel with reinforcements. The section was picked up by the Brigadier and added to his small force, ~~out to stop the raiders from advancing any further.~~

Brigadier Rajinder Singh's Heroic Action.[83]

The news of the invasion was first received at Srinagar on the morning of 22nd October when the Officer Commanding 4th Battalion spoke to the duty officer at Army Headquarters on wireless and informed him of the catastrophy that had befallen his troops. The Battalion Headquarters was at that time under attack by the enemy and Colonel Narain Singh could not pass anything beyond an urgent request for reinforcement, before going off the air. Unfortunately, however, there was at that time no reserve with the Army Headquarters. The 8th Battalion that was being held as reserve in Srinagar had, as we have seen already been pushed out to Chirala in view of the SOS call received from there during the first week of October and the 1st Battalion that was to come as its replacement was still stuck up at Poonch. On the other hand with the fall of Mazaffarabad and Domel a very critical situation had developed as there was now nothing between the enemy and Srinagar, the State capital. The only course open was to seek Indian help but even that was to take time and there was an urgent requirement for keeping the nemy away from Srinagar, till such help arrived. Consequently ~~odds and sods from~~ as much of the of the manpower as was immediately available at Badami Bagh cantonment ~~were~~ collected and formed into a strong company supported by a section of Medium Machine Guns and a detachment of 3 inch mortars for proceeding to the front and gaining the time needed for requisitioning help of the Indian Army. The company about 150 strong consisted of two platoons of the 1st Battalion, one platoon of the 8th Battalion, some personnel of the 7th Battalion (who were then doing line of communications duties along the Baramullah-Kohala road) and most of the staff and students of the

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83. Based on Draft Regimental History pp 229-236 as supplemented by account of the action compiled by Lt Col SS Pathania from interviews with the survivors of Brig Rajinder Singh's littl force and further interrogation of Lt Col Nasib Singh and Major Prabhat Singh and Lt Col Puran Singh Sambyhl (at that time GSO2 at ~~HQ~~ J&K) by the author at Jammu 1954

Training School. As the task that this little force was to perform was of vital importance to the security of not only Srinagar but also that of the entire State, the Maharaja who had just then returned from his tour of the Mirpur Sector entrusted its command to none other than the Chief-of-the Military Staff, Brigadier Rajinder Singh, himself. Three other Officers Captain Prithi Singh, Captain Khazan Singh, and Lieut Nasib Singh were also placed under his command.

Brigadier Rajinder Singh left Srinagar in military transport augmented by some civil buses, at 6.30 a.m. on 22nd October and reached Uri about midnight. Uri had been selected as the main defensive position and the force set about to organise and construct its defences immediately. The men worked hard through the remaining part of the night and by morning the defences were reasonably set. As the enemy was still some miles away, Brigadier Rajinder Singh left his defence in the care of a small party and moved forward with the major portion of his force towards Garhi to make contact with the enemy, and start the process of delaying his advance, as far away from the main defences as possible.

The first clash with the enemy took place on the morning of 23 October when the column was half a mile short of Garhi. In a head-long collision, in which each side was surprised by the other, the enemy due to his overwhelming numerical superiority ultimately got the better of the small ~~Dogra~~ Kashmir force, and after a sharp engagement, in which the leading platoon suffered its Commander Subedar Duni Chand killed and a few of others wounded, Brigadier Rajinder Singh withdrew his force to Hattian, two and half miles further back and took up a proper delaying position there. The action at Garhi, though a short one, had made atleast one thing clear that the enemy was in much greater strength and better organised and armed than

had been appreciated at the time Brigadier Rajinder Singh had moved out from Srinagar and that it was impossible for his little force to impose any appreciable delay on the enemy, unless it was considerably reinforced. So while the wounded which included Captain Prithi Singh were evacuated to Srinagar Brigadier Rajinder Singh flashed off a message to Army Headquarters suggesting the following:-

(a) All the other available men in the cantonment to be formed into units and despatched to thefront immediately.

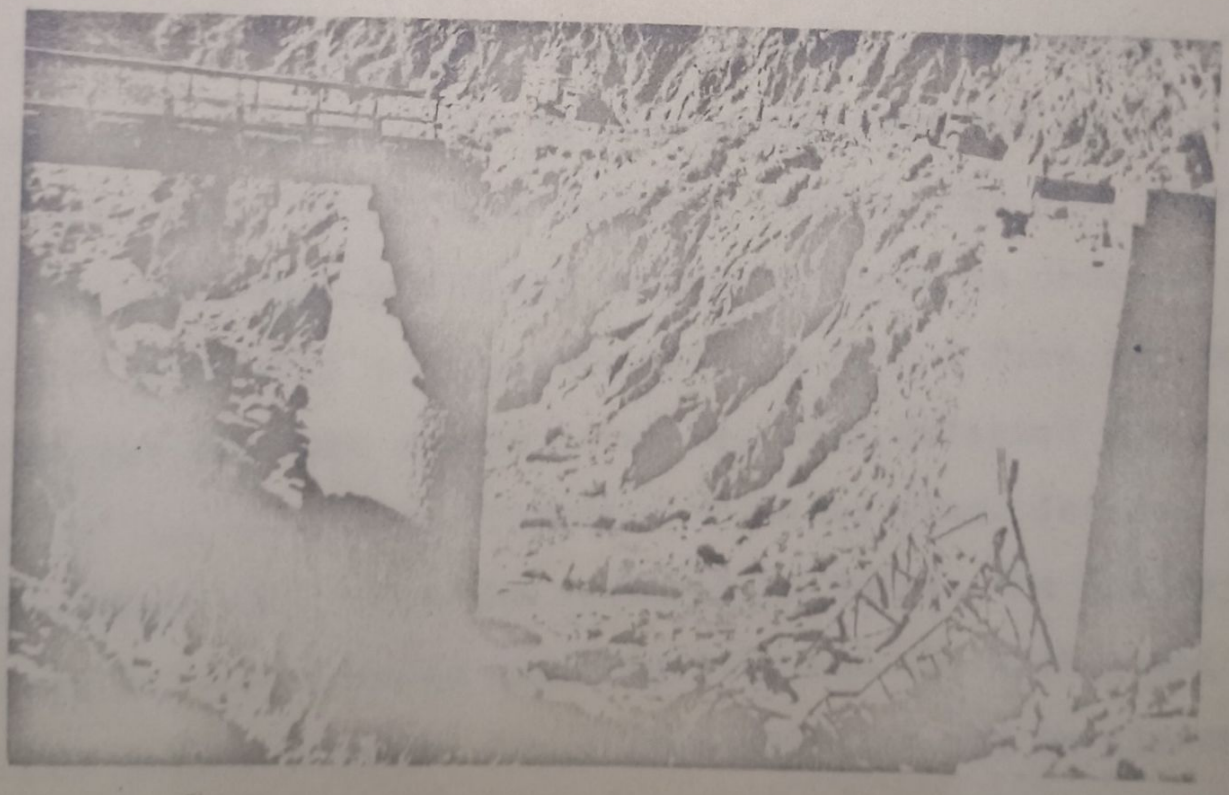
(b) Additional supporting weapons to be procured from some where and sent up urgently.

(c) One company from Poonch to advance via Rajipir and join up with the force at Uri.

(d) The company of the 4th Battalion located at Kupwara to immediately move down to Baramulla and thence to Uri.

Meanwhile after taking up another intermediary position between Hattian and Uri Brigadier Rajinder Singh was forced back to the main position at Uri by nightfall on 23 October. While the force was preparing for the last ditch stand at Uri, it was joined by ~~another platoon of infantry~~ reinforcements in the form of a platoon strength of infantry, one section medium machine guns and one section 3 inch mortars that had been sent under Captain Jawala Singh ~~as reinforcements~~ from the Badami Bagh Cantonment in response to the Chief of Staff's request. Jawala Singh while bringing an assurance that action on the Brigadier's other suggestion was in hand had also brought with him a written order from His Highness the Maharaja binding Brigadier Rajinder Singh to hold Uri at all costs even if it meant fighting to the last man and the last round ~~(see appx)~~. The reinforcements were no doubt woefully inadequate but there was nothing more that could be done about it than to prepare for a do and die battle. The men worked the whole night to make their defence as impregnable as was possible under the circumstances. Next morning (24th October) even as the defences were being improved and defensive fire tasks

Brigadier Rajinder [illegible] MVC.



The Uri Bridge after it was demolished by Brigade Rajinder Singh's party

were being registered, the bridge over the Uri Nala was prepared for demolition. The bridge was, however, not to be demolished till the last, to allow the maximum number of refugees to cross over to Uri.

Very soon during the day the enemy came hurtling along the road. As soon as he was sighted, the demolition was set off and the bridge was destroyed. Although this must have dampened the spirits of the raiders, the thought that they must reach Srinagar before the arrival of the Indian Army urged them on. In their hurry they launched a frontal attack only to be moved down by the sweeping fire of the ~~Dogra~~ machine guns. The 3 inch mortars also took a heavy toll of the enemy before he was compelled to retreat. Having been beaten back thus the enemy resorted to a tactical move which was to leave Brigadier Rajinder Singh with no alternative but to withdraw. Keeping the force engaged frontally a large portion of the enemy crossed over to the north bank of ~~Jehlum~~ Jhelum river by a foot bridge (that happenedd to have fallen in his hands in tact) with the intention of recrossing it behind the Uri defences near Mahura by another foot bridge. Another enemy column with a similar aim in view moved over the hills round the Dogra left flank. These were dangerous moves, for now, even if Brigadier Rajinder Singh had stuck to his defences as ordered, he would not have been able to stop the raiders from a free run to Srinagar. Fortunately the enemyx moves had been detected and realising thw gravity of the situation Brigadier Rajinder Singh decided to withdraw to Mahura and fight the next battle there. The Maharaja's orders had to be interpretted intelligently and the withdrawal was necessary for saving Srinagar which obviously was the aim of the Ruler in issueing his orders.

The first vehicle of the retreating column reached Mahura at about 10.30 p.m. on 24th October. Mistaking it for the enemy the staff at the power house out off the electric supplyx and the whole of Srinagar was plunged into darkness. That was the Dusserha night

and the Maharaja in order to prevent panic among the people was going through the usual practice of celebrating the festival, as if nothing was amiss. When the lights went off it was believed that the enemy had captured the Mahura power station. The Maharaja had by that time just completed the formalities of the Dussehra Durbar and the dinner that was to follow was held in the normal manner with the help of the Palace generator[84]. Side by side negotiations for the State's accession to the Indian Union were going on. It is interesting to note that while the State was struggling for survival, and ~~asking~~ requesting the Indian Government for help, the latter, probably at the instance of Sheikh Abdullah was pressing the former for introducing consitutional reforms in the State[85].

At dawn on 25 October the enemy caught up with Brigadier Rajinder Singh's force at Mahura and launched a fierce attack on the hurriedly constructed defences. The attack was beaten back with heavy casualties being inflicted on the raiders. The enemy then resorted to his usual tactics of out flanking the position and cutting off the rear. Sensing this Brigedier Rajinder Singh ordered Captains Jawala Singh and Nasib Singh to destroy the two bridges across the Jehlum at Buniyar. This they did but not before some enemy had already crossed over. By midday the enemy mounted another heavy attack on the Mahura defences but the little garrison held on to them tenaciously. Ultimately, however, while over a thousand Pathans hammered at the defences, an equal number once again moved over the hills in an out flanking move; making the position untenable. Thus by evening ~~the Dogras were~~ Brigadier Rajinder Singh was again forced to withdraw to another position at Buniyar.

The delay that this small ~~Dogra~~ J&K force was causing must have been very frustrating for the enemy. He caught up with ~~the defenders~~ it

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84. Mehr Chand Mahajan Looking Back.

85. Sardar Patel Correspondence pp 61-63.

at Buniyar by the morning of 26th October and went in straight for the attack. This attack was also beaten back with the Dogra medium machine guns and mortars once again taking a heavy toll. During the fighting that continued the whole day the defenders also suffered many casualties but they stood their ground right till the evening. Brigadier Rajinder Singh now expected the enemy to try his usual out flanking move during the night. He therefore decided to withdraw well in time during the night to give another grim battle at Sori, forward of Baramulla.

The withdrawal commenced at about midnight but as the enemy had by that time closed in too near the defences it became difficult for the force to make the clean break with the enemy, such as it had been able to do during all their previous withdrawals. Even worst was the fact that this time the enemy had already worked his way behind the defences and established a road block a few miles in the rear. When the withdrawing force tried to negotiate the road block they found it effectively covered by enemy fire. As they tried to rush their vehicles through, the driver of the second last vehicle in which Brigadier Rajinder Singh was travelling was killed. The Brigadier took to the wheel but hardly had he moved his vehicle when he too was shot in the leg, making it impossible for him to drive. The vehicle had to be abondoned while the men dismounted and ran out of the enemy cross fire to safety. We have it on the testimony of Captain Khazan Singh who was in the same vehicle as Brigadier Rajinder Singh, that he and his men offered to carry the Brigadier on their backs but he, appreciating that carrying him would hinder the withdrawal, asked them to leave him there, and themselves rush to the next defensive position. That was the last that was seen of this gallant son of Jammu. The tragedy of the situation lies in the fact that, unknown to the Brigadier and Capt Khazan Singh, the last vehicle carrying the rear guard was yet to cross the road block when Captain

Khazan Singh and his men abandoned the vehicle and took to the hills. When the last vehicle finally arrived on the spot, its commander Subedar Swaru Singh steered his vehicle past the abandoned vehicle through enemy fire without knowing that Brigadier Rajinder Singh was lying wounded some where around.

With the enemy too close on their heels and the force having got greatly disorganised it could not take up a defensive position at Seri as planned by Brigadier Rajinder Singh and it rushed past Baramulla to take up a position between Baramulla and Pattan. On its way, a little beyond Baramulla it was met by the company of the 4th Battalion under Captain Prabhat Singh, that had just arrived from Kupwara. Thereafter Captain Prabhat Singh took charge of the situation while Captain Jawala Singh, himself wounded, carried the dead and the wounded to Srinagar. As it was too late to save Baramulla, and in order to avoid a running battle Captain Prabhat Singh deployed his company and the remenants of Jawala Singh force a little distance to the east of Baramulla and waited for the enemy there.

Meanwhile after two or three days of haggling over the issue, the Indian Government finally accepted the accession of the State to the Indian Union on 26th October. Unfortunately the accession was made conditional, subject to the ascertaining of the will of people on return of normalcy, which was to cause much embarrasment to the Government of India subsequently. Be it as it may, the accession opened the way for the despatch of Indian troops to Kashmir and the first batch consisting of two companies of the 1st Battalion, The Sikh Regiment, under Lieut Colonel Ranjit Rai, landed at the Srinagar airfield on the morning of 27 October 1947. Immediately on arrival, Colonel Rai pushed forward towards Baramulla with one company, leaving the other for the defence of the airfield. He made contact with the company of the 4th J&K Infantry Battalion

under Captain Prabhat Singh and not being satisfied with a defensive position so far back in the rear, he chose to advance still further and meet the raiders as far out as possible. Colonel Rai's decision was correct and befitting of a brave soldier, that he was, but he had erred in venturing out so far with so few troops. Evidently he was not aware of what he was going in for; not believing the State Force version of the strength of the enemy, probably because of the usual prejudice against the State Forces.[86] As he reached the outskirts of Baramulla, his company was heavily attacked by overwhelming superior numbers of raiders who were then just coming out of the town after completing what came to be known as the rape of Baramulla. The Sikhs fought most courageously but were ultimately forced to retreat. Colonel Rai then sent a message for the second company to join up, but before that could happen he got killed during the running fight that the company had got involved in. The second company joined up soon but could not stem the route and the Sikhs alongwith Captain Prabhat Singh's ~~Dogras~~ Company were pushed right back to the outskirts of Srinagar. Fortunately the rest of the Sikh Battalion had arrived by air a little before this, and Major Sampuran Bachan Singh, who assumed command, was able to lead the Battalion back to Pattan before the end of the day.[87]

~~Brig~~ Brigadier L P Sen arrived at Srinagar on the 29th of October and made an assessment of the military situation in the valley. In his report to the Army Headquarters at Delhi, Brigadier Sen appeared to consider that even a brigade strength, that was being planned to be built up in Srinagar, was totally inadequate for the task of saving Srinagar, let alone that of driving the raiders ~~out~~ back to where they had come from. He felt that the area was much too large and the enemy

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86. Lt Col Bhagwan Singh, Political Conspiracies of Kashmir Light & Life Publishers, Delhi P 89
87. Lt General L P Sen Slender was the Thread (Kashmir Confrontation 1947-48) Orient Longman, New Delhi 1969 pp 46-48.

far too superior numerically for the three battalions of a brigade. A brigade strength would not, therefore, be able to prevent the enemy from infiltrating into the city. He made a bid for a full infantry division strength in the Valley immediately.[88] The requirement was more or less accepted by the Government of India and was planned for accordingly.

Interesting though were further operations of the Indian Army in the Baramulla sector, we must leave off here and get back to the Poonch and Mirpur sectors where the units of the J&K State Force were engaged in another do and die struggle in the defence of their motherland. Suffice it to say that Srinagar had been saved from being ravaged in the nick of time. So had the State been saved from forcible union with Pakistan and all that might have followed. That the action of Brigadier Rajinder Singh, and his handful of ~~Dogras~~ State Troops towards this end was gallant to the extreme is unquestionable. Brigadier Sen's assessment of the prevailing military situation gives some idea of what the ~~Dogras~~ J&K troops were up against in delaying the Pakistani hordes for four crucial days; the much needed time for the Indian Army to come in. They had not only disrupted the enemy's planned schedule of celebrating 'Id' at Srinagar but also afforded the city a chance to survive. The services of Brigadier Rajinder Singh and the supreme sacrifice of his life which he made were duly recognised by the Government of India with the posthumous award of the first Mahavir Chakra of free India. Another gallant among the gallants was Subedar Ram Saran Das of the 8th Battalion who commanded the two datachments of 3 inch Mortars during this action. The courage and the inspiring leadership shown by the Subedar in ~~consid~~ disregard of his personal safety was also recognised by the awar of

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88. Ibid pp 52-53

a Vir Chakra.

Labh Singh's long Track to Safety.[89]

When Musaffarabad and Domel were attacked on 22 October, 'A' Company (Hindu) of the 4th Battalion with a detachment of 3 inch mortars, and a platoon of 'B' Company of same Battalion, was located at Kohala-Barsala under Lieut Labh Singh. Labh Singh had learnt of the fate that had befallen the Battalion Headquarters on 22 October itself, but before he could ask the Commanding Officer as to what were the orders for him, communications with the Battalion Headquarters had got cut. Labh Singh therefore, decided to hold on to his posts till some clear picture of the situation emerged. At that time troops under him were deployed as under :-

(a) No 3 platoon under Jamedar Suraj Parkash- Kohala bridge

(b) No 4 platoon ('B' Company) under Jamedar Romal Singh - - Bagla Sikhan

(c) 'A' Company less platoon- Barsala Dak Bungalow.

Besides, there was the newly raised platoon of the Garrison Police. This platoon was raised from the local exservicemen (mostly Sikhs) and placed under the command of Havildar Bhagat Ram of the 4th Battalion. This platoon was also located in the Bagla Sikhan area. On learning about the invasion of the State, Labh Singh moved his headquarters and the two platoons of his company from Barsala Dak Bunglow to their previously prepared defensive position on the Dangali hills south east of Barsala and got ready to meet the enemy attack which appeared imminent. Nothing, however, happened for the next two days. It looked as if the enemy in his eagerness to reach Srinagar had forgotten all about the Kohala-Barsala position.

The Company first received Pakistani attention on 24 October when at about 5 p.m. two British officers of the Pakistani army- a Brigadier and a Leiutenant Colonel- walked across the Kohala bridge

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89. Based on an account written by Lieut Labh Singh immediately soon after the operations, and Draft Regimental History pp 237-247

and asked the sentry to send for the company commander. The Brigadier then warned Labh Singh of the impending attack and suggested that he get his company out of the area before the raiders made it impossible for them to withdraw. He offered to escort the Dogras to Rawalpindi, where they could join the Sikh and Gorkha troops of the Indian army, who were in the process of being repatriated to India. The condition, however, was that the Dogras were to surrender all their weapons other than personal arms before being allowed to proceed to Rawalpindi. Lieut Labh Singh rejected the offer out of hand and boldly told the British Officers that the Dogras would rather fight to death than to surrender like this. His was duly supported by Jamedar Suraj Prakash who had remained by his side during the meeting. With this the meeting came to an abrupt end and the British Officers left, wishing the Dogras all the best, even though somewhat sarcastically. The decision taken by lieut Labh Singh was unanimously endorsed by the other Junior Commission Officers and it was generally agreed that if the company had at all to withdraw it would rather withdraw to Bagh; even if it meant fighting all the way. Same evening the Pakistanis were seen reinforcing their garrison on the other side of the bridge.

Early morning on 25th October three men of the local Garrison Police company that had been located in the Domel area arrived at Kohala and informed the Garrison Commander that they had escaped from Domel with Lieut Colonel Narain Singh and three other men of the Garrison Police Company on the night of 22 October but were ambushed when they had moved just were 3 miles from Domel on their way to Kohala. The Colonel and three men had been killed while these three had escaped, and had now managed to reach Kohala with great difficulty They also informed the garrison commander that while the main force of the enemy had left for Srinagar, a sizeable portion had been left behind to deal with the Kohala-Barsala positions and a major attack could be expected any time. It was now clear to Labh Singh that all was now lost and he would be serving no useful purpose by holding on

to his positions. He, therefore, decided to withdraw during the night 25/26 October before the enemy attack. To prevent the enemy from interfering with the withdrawal No. 4 platoon was ordered to move up from Bagla Sikhan to Topa Hill, a feature that dominated the route of with drawal.

The attack came during midday on 25th October, which was earlier than was expected but luckily not before Topa Hill had been occupied. Because of the tactical importance of Topa Hill the enemy during his attack concentrated all his energies against it making it more and more difficult for Jemadar Romal Singh to hold it. Consequentl-ly another platoon under Jemadar Dharam Singh was sent up to reinforce this position. Side by side, the platoon on the Kohala bridge was quietly withdrawn to join the rest of the company after which the company abandoned its positions in the Dangali Hills and moved to Bagla Sikhan in preparationfor the planned withdrawal. A large number of refugees had by now collected at Bagla and these were brought under the protection of the Company.

While preparations for the withdrawal were being made, it was realised that it would not be safe to withdraw while the enemy continued to hold positions on the Topa ridge. Besides his main position at Dan Gali, he had positions right dawn the ridge between Topa Hill and Dan Gali. It was, therefore, decided that the whole Company climb up to Topax Hill and thenadvance along the ridge; clearing the enemy from the ridge while rolling down. The advance commenced at 2.15 a.m. on 26 October and was led by No. 4 platoon uder Jemadar Romal Singh with some local men of the Garrison Police acting as guides and scouts. Soon the first enemy position was reached, without the enemy having any idea of what was happending. Naik Makhan Singh of the GPC who was acting as the scout crawled close to the position and pounced on the sentry, killing him with his sword before he could raise an alarm.

Naik Chhaju Ram of the leading section then hurled a grenade in the midst of a group of 20 enemy sleeping together under quilts and while most of them were killed in their sleep, those who tried to run were riddled with bullets fired by the section. Thereafter the enemy fled from all hisxx other positions along the ridge and joined up at his main position at Dan Gali. No. 2 platoon under Jemadar Dharam Singh was then pushed forward, with Dan Gali as its objective. Dan Gali was, however, strongly held by the enemy, and as Dharam Singh's platoon approached the position at day-break it came under very heavy and accurate fire, making it impossible for it to proceed further. 3 inch mortars were then brought into action and the position was captured after about one hours fighting. The Commander of the post, one Subedar Ghulam Mohammed, (Ex Baluch Regiment), and eight of his men were taken prisoners while a big haul of arms and ammunition was made. The enemy had left behind about 8000 rounds of 303 ammunition, 21 hand granades, and 55 Pathan rifles which proved most useful to our troops. The Pathan rifles were issued to the refugees for their protection. After the Dan Gali battle the enemy maintained a respectable distance from the column and resorted to sniping from long range, as the column now advanced towards Awera well on its way to Bagh. So shaken was the enemy tht he did nothing to disturb the peaceful night that the column spent at Awera.

Early morning on 27th October, asthe column was preparing to advance from Awera, a Jatha of about 30 Sikhs arrived in the camp from Mandhari. The Jatha had been sent by Havildar Balwan Singh of the 5th Garrison Police Company, who, with a few of his men, xhad escaped to Mandhari after his platoon commander and the Hindu/Sikh element of his platoon had been killed by the Muslim Majority at the Mahara post. At Mandhari Balwan Singh had found a large numner of Hindu/Sikh refugees who had collected there from adjoining areas, desparately trying to defend themselves against attacks from Muslims. On arrival

Balwan Singh had taken over charge of the camp and was now engaged in defending it heroically with the help of Sikh refugees armed with swords, some muzzle loaders and just two pathan rifles. He and his men had already exausted their ammunition and the Jatha had been sent to seek the column's help in extricating the 6000 refugees in the camp camp before they were attacked by the enemy in strength. Labh Singh gave 50 rounds of .303 to the Sikhs and sent them off back to their camp, with the promise that he would lead his column to Mandhari immediately.

The columnn reached Mandhari at about 2.30 p.m. sending a wave of joy among the beseiged refugees, as they joined the column with a renewed hope of life. The refugees now nearly 9000 strong were held in the middle of the column with military detachments in their front and rear, and the column moved out of Mandhari towards Chikar Gali the same night. The enemy was either unaware of this move or did not wish to get involved in night fighting and he permitted the column to march during the night inx peace. However, as day broke out and the column halted for rest at a place called Sangar Chikar (7245 ft above sea level) the enemy struck and about a hundred local Mulsims armed with muskets, swords, and axes, and suported by about 30 Pakista-ni soldiers attacked the column from all directions. The attack was repulsed and as the enemy took up xxx positions all round, the column organised a strong counter attack led by Jemadar Romal Singh and supported by a strong Sikh Jatha from among the refugees. A big gap was created in the enemy ring but before the column could make use of it the enemy rallied and plugged the gap. Fighting continued till 5.30 p.m. that day with the mortars keeping the enemy away from the refugees, who formed his main target. The enemy was finally put to flight with a very strong counter attack by two platoons and a jatha of Sikh refugees. Besides suffering a large number of dead (17 in

uniform) and wounded the enemy left behind 7 rifles one thousand roun rounds of .303 ammunition and some milk, butter, and prathas, which were badly needed by the column. Naik Bharat Singh and Lance Naik Hans Raj were killed in this attack as also were five brave Sikhs of the refugee jatha. Their bodies were cremated before the column commenced its move forward. The success of this counter attack was undoubtedly due to the extra-ordinary courage displayed by all ranks and the Sikh refugees who took part in the attack. Particularly conspicuous for their gallantry and leadership, however, were Jemadar Suraj Prakash, Naik Bharat Singh, Naik Bhagat Singh and Naik Rattan Singh.

The withdrawal was continued through the night 28/29 October with the help of guides provided by the refugees and avoiding Sudan Gali which was known to be strongly held by the enemy, the column reached the top of Nanga Pir on the morning of 29th October 1947. Here again the column was attacked by a large mob of local Muslims variously armed and duly supported by 60 to 70 men in uniform armed with rifles and a light machine gun. The platoons immediately threw a defensive cordon around the refugees who were in the process of cooking their meals, and the attack was repulsed with the help of mortar fire. The enemy then took up positions surrounding the column and no amount of effort on the part of the column could break the enemy ring around it. In fact, as night fell, the enemy closed in further, making any break all the more difficult. By morning on 30 October it was quite evident that, with the ammunition exausted to a dangerously low level, a desperate situation, demanding a kill or be killed action on the part of the column, had reached. Consequently at 6 a.m. three platoons supported by strong Sikh Jathas were put in the attack in an all out bid to break through the enemy positions. The attack was successful and after half an hour's fierce fighting

the enemy was finally thrown back. While a large number of the enemy was killed, the column suffered Lance Naik Shiv Ram, Sepoy (Cook) Jito and quite a few of the refugees killed and many other Ranks and refugees wounded. The enemy left behind six pathan rifles, one rifle .303 and 80 rounds of .303 ammunition. Identifications were found to show that the attackers had among them Muslim deserters from No. 5 Garrison Police Company, and the 4th J&K Infantry.

Absolute confusion prevailed as the refugees seeing their chance of survival ran down the mountain towards Bagh that was just 8 miles away. No. 2 and 3 platoons under Jemadar Dharam Singh and Jemadar Suraj Prakash respectively acted as the rear guard and kept the enemy from interfering with the withdrawal. The column, however, had become considerably lengthened and military protection could not be provided all along its length. Taking advantage of the vulnerability of the column the enemy attacked the refugees in the middle of the column at Thob (about six miles from Bagh) and inflicted a number of casualties on the helpless refugees before they could be rescued. Sepoy Dharam Singh who though wounded in the foot displayed great courage while beating back the enemy ambush with the help of some armed Sikh refugees. Except for this ambush the enemy had generally left the column alone and it reached Bani Pasari (3 miles short of Bagh) by about 3 p.m. that day.

Although just three miles away from Bagh, Labh Singh decided to harbour for the night at Bani Pasari. All these days he had been out of contact with the rest of the world and was not even sure whether Bagh was still being held by the State troops. At Bani Pasari the enemy was still hesitant to get too close to the column and instead sent his agents to the Dogra camp in guise of sympathisers to gauge the strength of the troops. The agents even lured some refugees to seek free passage to Poonch from the Pathans by making some cash payment. Consequently a representative of the refugees slipped out of the camp at night and

contacted the enemy commander for offering money as the price for the refugees being granted a safe passage to Poonch. The enemy Commander took the money, made the refugee prisoner and extracted from him information regarding the fighting state of the troops in the column. Fortunately the refugee painted a very grim picture which made the enemy commander to throw caution to the winds as he approached the Dogra camp at Bani Pasari. Believing that the Dogras were not in a position to fight for lack of ammunition he entered the camp with only a few men to seek their surrender while the rest of his men (about 50 to 60) remained huddled together on a piece of high ground just in front of Jemadar Suraj Prakash's Platoon. The Dogras at that time had limited ammunition, and therefore, they held fire, to be able to make the biggest kill with the least amount of fire. While the enemy commander was allowed to enter right inside the camp, to meet the column commander, Suraj Prakash trained all his three light machine guns on the enemy concentration on the high ground in front of him. Now when the enemy Commander approached Lieut Labh Singh to seek his surrender, Sepoy Beli Ram opened fire and shot him through the head. On this Suraj Prakash let go his guns on the enemy cluster in front of him and not many could have escaped they deadly fire. Hardly had this fire fight ended, when the Dogras came under heavy enemy fire from a hill dominating their camp. With the morale skey high, the column launched attack an immediate attack on this hill with three platoons, while the fourth stayed back in the camp for the protection of the refugees. The attack was successful in evicting the enemy from his position and thus opening the way for the last leg of the march to Bagh. Even as the attack was in progress, some refugees had managed to sneak out to Bagh. On being informed of the fighting that Labh Singh's column was engaged in the garrison commander, Lieut Colonel

Khaluk Singh

Maluk Singh had sent a company under Lieut Mahatam Singh to bring the column safely to Bagh. This company arrived when the fight for the hill had just ended and the two companies together now escorted the refugees to Bagh. The joy among the refugees and the troops of Labh Singh's column was great as they reached Bagh at 2.30 p.m. on 31 October, at the end of a seven days gruelling and harrowing experience. For the moment they even seemed to have forgotten their sorrow and anguish on having lost so many of their near and dear ones during this long treck to safety.

Operations under the Mirpur Brigade

During the crucial period between the fall of Muzaffarabad and the arrival of the Indian Army, the three garrisons of the Poonch Brigade at Bagh, Rawalakot and Poonch town, though desperate with regard to the ammunition and rations situation, stuck tenaciously to their positions in face of repeated Pakistani attacks. The situation under the Mirpur Brigade, during the same period, however, took a serious turn- not so much due to enemy action as due to treachery of some Muslim troops of the Brigade.

On 22 October Brigadier Chattar Singh was ambushed by the enemy near Ban Bridge as he was proceeding to Kotli with his escort. His orderly was killed while he, alongwith three Other Rank, was wounded, before the party could take up a defensive positions for a fight back. The party was finally rescued by Subedar Shanker Singh's platoon located at the bridge. Next morning the Commander planned a simultaneous attack from Jhangar and Kotli on enemy positions that lay between these two places. Sandwitched between the two forces thus the enemy suffered very heavy casualties and was forced to vacate his positins. Comparatively, own casualties, with five killed eleven wounded and seven missing believed killed, were considered light. 90

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90. Brigadier Chattar Singh Notes.

On 24 October the enemy lauched a massive attack on Dadyal which was being held by a company of the 3rd Battalion under Major Kripal Singh (Salathia). This post had been under continuous pressure of the enemy ever since the middle of October when its outposts at Hill and Chaomukh had to be withdrawn under enemy pressure. Besides subjecting the post to regular 3 inch and 2 inch fire the enemy had soon been able to form a tight ring round the post; cutting it off completely from Mirpur. A number of attempts had been made from Mirpur to rescue the garrison but theyx had all failed as the enemy around Dadyal was about three companies strong and not more than a company could be spared from Mirpur for this task. When a full fledged attack on the post came on 24th October, the company had not only to face over-whelming numbers of the enemy, but also an acute shortage of rations and ammunition caused by about two weeks of enemy blockade. The attack was no doubt successfully repulsed but at the end of it the ammunition situation had become ever more precarious and it was more than clear that the garrison would not be able to stand another such attack. Consequently Major Kripal Singh decided to abandon the post and withdraw to Mirpur during the night 24/25 October. The withdrawal was well planned and so wellx executed that the enemy learnt of it only at day break, by which time the company had already crossed the Poonch river half a mile upstream, from the ferry point at Chaomukh. The enemy then made a strong bid to prevent the company from escaping but the withdrawal was well organised and the rear guard successfully kept the enemy at an arms length while the rest withdrew. As the Dayal garrison was trying to break contact with the enemy thus, it was joined by a column under Major Ram Saran Karki, which had been sent from Mirpur for its rescue. The two then fought the enemyx together and affected a clean break to reach Mirpur by 10 a.m. on 25 October.[91]

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91. Ibid

It was, however, not so much the enemy action that was to make the situation in the Mirpur area critical as was the treachery of some Muslim troops, more foul and heinous than that perpetrated at Muzaffarabad and Domel. We have already seen how Tharochi fort was recaptured on 18th October by a column from the 2nd Battalion under Captain Rahmat Ullah Khan and how on 21 October this force was ordered to return to Jhangar after leaving the fort to the care of the two Gorkha platoons under Lieut Raghubir Singh Thappa. While on its way to Jhangar the column had met with strong opposition at Juna and Captain Rahamat Ullah was unable to make it to Jhangar as ordered. Consequently on 26 October Major Nassarullah Khan, the Brigade Major of the Mirpur Brigade, was despatched to Juna with two Gorkha platoons of the 2nd Battalion, to first extricate Captain Rahamat Ullah's column and then proceed to Tharochi and deliver to the garrison supplies which he was to carry with x him.[92] It is difficult to believe that the Commander Mirpur Brigade was at that time not yet aware of the treachery committed by the Muslim Soldiers of the Fateh Shivji Battalion. He probably had no other choice at that stage, but to trust the Muslim Officers and troops under him. In any case even if he was to take action against them it was necessary to have them concentrated at the Brigade Headquarters, which infact he was trying to do. Be it at it may Nassarullah acted faster than his commander and on reaching Juna, the villianous traitor, arranged a hush meeting of Muslim Officers and Junior Commissioned Officers, at which plans were made for committing a deed most depraved, vicious and inhumane to the extreme. As per this plan the Muslim company guarded the perimeter while the Gorkhas were obligingly asked to rest and sleep during the night 26/27 October night. Then as the Gorkhas were sleeping they were attacked by their Muslim guards and nearly all of them including their officer Lieut Prem Singh

92. Ibid

were killed. Only a few Gorkhas escaped this blood bath and reached Naoshera to narrate the ghastly episode but not before that the wicked Nassarullah had struck again. Joining hands with the enemy next day he led the Muslim company to Tharochi fort. The Tharochi garrison was till now unaware of the treachery at Juna and in their ignorance captain Raghubir Singh and his men accorded a warm welcome to their Muslim bretheren. Nassarullah was thus able to repeat his nefarious act at Tharochi as his Muslim company pounced on the sleeping Gorkhas on 27/28 October night and butchered practically every one of them including Captain Raghubir Singh; while Tahrochi fo fort was handed over to the enemy on a platter.[93]

The Jammu Sector

Fortunately Pakistan had not planned an invasion of Jammu along with that of the Kashmir Valley. For, if she had, then there was nothing to prevent her from over running Jammu within a matter of hours. There was as we have seen only one battalion, the 5th and the Body Guard Cavalary, under the Jammu Brigade which was since 17 October being commanded by Brigadier N.S. Rawat and both the units were spread all along the border from Madhopur to Manawar-wali-Khad. In view of the threat to Jammu after the States accession to the Indian Union, all the bridges along the Sialkot-Jammu road and the railway were blown up by own troops in the area.

It would thus be seen that when the Indian Army took over the Operations in Jammu and Kashmir the State forces except for what they had lost in the Kashmir valley and in some outlying areas of Mirpur due to the treachery of its Muslim Troops, were "holding the fort", even if precariously, all over the State. After the arrival of the Indian troops it might have been expected that even if all lost territory was not recovered, no more would be lost.

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93. Ibid

Unfortunately, however, while most of the lost territory in the Kashmir Valley was recovered, the entire Gilgit, and huge chunks in the Jammu region were lost to the enemy after the Indian Union took over responsibility for the defence of the State. Not that the Indian army was to blame for this. Indeed there were many factors, not all military, that were responsible for this and both the army as well as the Government of India had no control over most of them. Never-the-less it must have been a terrible disappointment to the State troops when, rather than being aided with arms, ammunition equipment and rations, they were asked to withdraw from places like Bagh, Rawalakot, Mirpur, Kotli, Skardu which they had defended under most unfavourable circumstances so long. The circumstances under which these places had to be abandoned and the part played by the State Force units in the J&K Operations under the Indian Army are narrated in the next Chapter.

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CHAPTER IX

OPERATION UNDER THE INDIAN ARMY

FALL OF GILGIT[1]

While the various beleagured State Force garrisons in the Mirpur and Poonch sectors were giving proof of tenacity in defence, extreme physical endurance, and expamplary discipline, high drama was being enacted at Gilgit. We have already seen, in the last chapter, the dilema in which Brigadier Ghansar Singh had found himself on taking over as the Governor of Gilgit. There he was faced with the hostility of the Gilgit Scouts engineered by their commandant Major Brown and for countering this hostility he had at his disposal only one Muslim Company of the 6th J&K Infantry at Bunji that could not have been relied upon; the Sikh company at Bunji being composed of raw recruits who were operationly unfit. After the Maharaja acceeded the State to the Dominion of India, the Governor had no doubt apprehended trouble. In fact the had already warned the State Government that g Gilgit would be lost the day the State acceeded to India but there was nothing that he or the State Government could do about it. While the revolt of the Gilgit Scouts was breading up, the Governor was hesitating to get the Muslim Company to Gilgit for fear of precipitating matters. The States accession to India and the Indian Government's take over of the responsibility for the security of the State had in no way improved upon his options. The army that the Indian Government was able to send to the State immediately after its accession was barely sufficient to save Srinagar and at the most to push the enemy back to a safe distance. The question of sending troops to Gilgit had perhaps

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1. Based primarily on Brigadier Ghansar Singh's accoount as noted in his Memoirs and the account contained in the Draft History of the J&K Rifles produced by the Regimental Centre in 1963 pp 248-255.

Brigadier Ghansar Singh, Governor Gilgit
in Ceremonial dress

not even been considered in view of the effort involved. Consequently when matters appeared to be coming to a head, on 30th October, the Governor sent a message to Lieut Colonel Majid Khan, the Officer Commanding 6th Battalion at Bunji to reach Gilgit immediately and with as much force as was possible for him to do. The 6th Battalion which, as part of Kashmir Brigade, was responsible for the security of Gilgit-Ladakh region was at that time deployed as under :-

(a) Battalion less two companies -Bunji

(b) Company less platoon -Leh

(c) Two platoons -Kargil (one from Leh company and one from Skardu company)

(d) Company less platoon -Skardu

The class composition of the Battalion was 50% Muslims and 50% Sikhs. Of the Sikh companies one was located at Bunji and one at Leh while the Muslim companies were located one each at Bunji and Skardu. The Sikh company at Bunji, as we have already seen, consisted of raw recruits who had not even completed their training and were not fit operationally. Colonel Majid Khan could not, therefore, send more than one company (Muslim) to Gilgit in response to the call from the Governor. Being himself indisposed he sent this company to Gilgit under Captain Hassan Khan accompanied by Captain Ishan Ali. Both these officers were perhaps already in league with the Gilgit Scout officers and the rebels had little to fear from the troops coming to the rescue of the Governor. Even then Major Brown decided to stage a coup-de-tat before their arrival in Gilgit. Accordingly on 31st October/1st November night, 100 Scouts led by Major Brown, Lieut Haider Khan and Subedar Major Babur Khan surrounded the residence of Brigadier Ghansar Singh to demand his surrender. The Governor woke up to the noise in the verandah and suspecting that some unarmed men were trying to break into the house, he fired a shot in the air from his pistol to scare away the instruders. At this the Scouts

opened up indescriminate fire from machine guns into the building, smashing window panes and skylights. Thereafter intermittant fire from rifles continued till about 4 a.m.

While the Governor was surrounded thus the Scouts sent some Hindu Officials to convey to him the intention of the Scouts to kill all the Hindus in Gilgit in case the Governor decided not to surrender Gilgit to them. The Governor on the other hand was waiting for the company of the 6th Battalion which was expected to arrive any movement. No troops, however, arrived as, acting in league with the Scouts, Hassan Khan and Ishan Ali left the company half way at Bari and came to Gilgit all by themselves. Seeing these officers to be one with the Scouts Brigadier Ghansara Singh was left with no option but to surrender to the rebels on Ist November. The rebels then formed a provisional government in Gilgit headed de-jure by one subedar Rais Khan but de-facto by the master conspirator Major Brown himself. Captains Ishan Ali and Hassan Khan were also included in the cabinet. A flag hoisting ceremony was duly performed and Gilgit was offered to Pakistan on a platter; which she gratefully accepted.

On getting news of the treachery of his troops in Gilgit, Lt Col Majid Khan even though indisposed rushed to Gilgit. There was, however, nothing he could do under the circumstances. Instead of paying heed to his advice the rebels asked him to join their ranks. Having refused to join the traitors he too was imprisoned alongwith Brigadier Ghansar Singh.

Major Brown had evidently staged the coup with the intention of handing over only the earstwhile Gilgit Agency to Pakistan (probably as a matter of British policy) and wanted to have nothing to do with other parts of Gilgit. As a matter of fact he had offered the Governor and his staff a safe passage to Bunji as one

of the terms of surrender. However, he soon yielded to the pressure from other member of the 'Cabinet' and decided to occupy the whole of Gilgit. He ordered Captain Matheson the 2nd-in-command of the Gilgit Scouts to move from Chilas, where he was located, and occupy Astore with a view to cut the line of withdrawal of the Sikh company at Bunji while he himself attacked Bunji from the north with the Muslim company of the 6th Battalion and some of his scouts. The Sikh out post at Janglote which bore the first brunt of the attack was completely wiped out. Only one soldier managed to escape to Bunji after crossing the Indus, to inform the garrison of the fate suffered by the outpost.

Having been thus warned of the impending attack and finding their position hipeless in view of the ~~muslim~~ trachery of muslim troops at Gilgit Captains Baldev Singh (Bajwa) and Sukhdev Singh decided to withdraw the Sikh element ~~the Sikhs~~ at Bunji ~~decided to withdraw~~ to Skardu and join up with the company there. ~~When~~ However when in the process they reached Astore they found their way blocked by the scouts under Matheson. ~~and~~ In an attempt to by pass post Astore the Baldev Singh and party took to the mountains ~~Sikhs led by Captains Baldev Singh Bajwa and Sukhdev Singh took to the mountains~~. ~~However~~ But, moving over the mountainous country without tracks and guides, the Sikhs lost their bearing and after spending a fortnight in the wilderness they returned to Bunji tired, hungry, and sick, only to give themselves up to the Scouts. They were made prisoners of war and sent to Pakistan where they remained in the various camps till repatriated in 1950.

The take over of Bunji and Astore was followed by massacre of Hindus and Sikhs who refused to get converted while their women folk were abducted and raped. In fact general chaos and lawlessness prevailed in the entire Gilgit region for the next few days. It may, however, be mentioned here that the Amirs, Rajas and the people of Gilgit in general had no hand in the revolt or the atrocities that were perpeterated on the minority community. Indeed the majority of the people were helpless spectators to the drama being enacted entirely by the Gilgit Scouts under Major Brown and the Muslim

Officers and soldiers of the 6th J&K Infantry.

It was sometimes in the third week of November 1947 that Sardar Mohammad Alam flew into Gilgit from Peshawar to take over its administration on behalf of the Pakistan Government. Thereafter regular air service between Peshawar and Gilgit was resumed, and soon started an influ of Pakistani civil and military officials. By the end of November Pakistan was in complete control of the administr-ration in the Gilgit region.

After the fall of Gilgit and Bunji all that was left of the 6th Battalion was two companies- one sikh and the other muslim- under the 2nd-in-command Major Sher Jang Thappa with his headquarters at Leh. As we have already seen the Sikh Company was located at Leh with one of its platoons at Kargil. The two platoons at Kargil (one Sikh + one Muslim) formed a mobile column under Captain Ganga Singh. The Army Headquarters J&K State Force, which now came to be referred to as Army Headquarters (Dogra), now realised that the enemy's next target would be Skardu and as Leh and Kargil were yet comparatively safe, Major Sher Jang was ordered to move immediately to Skardu with a Platoon from Leh and another from Kargil. Consequently Major Sher Jang arrived at Skardu and on 3rd December 1947 along with Captain Ganga Singh and seventy five sikh other Rank and immediately set about to organise the defence of Skardu. He carried out an extensive reconnaissance of Skardu and the surrounding areas and appreciated that if the enemy was to attack Skardu during the winter he would have to, per-force, approach via Rondu; all the other approaches being impassable due to heavy snow. It was also known that of all the Rajas of Skardu Tehsil only the Raja of Rondu had turned hostile and that the Rajas of that he had even invited the enemy to use his territory for the invasion of Skardu. As a first step, therefore, major Thappa established two platoon posts on either side of the Indus at Tsari; approximately 20 miles north-west of Skardu town. A Muslim platoon

under Captain Nek Alam was deployed on the right bank while a sikh platoon under Captain Krishan Singh was posted on the near side. With these two platoons out, there were hardly two platoons left for the defence of Skardu proper. Even as these two platoons were deployed on picquets around Skardu in the best possible manner, the defence arrangement could not be termed satisfactory because of the large area to be covered and such few troops available for this task. Major Thappa therefore sent frantic messages to Srinagar for reinforcements of Skardu was to be saved.

BAGH, RAWALAKOT AND MAJIRA VACATED[2]

With Uri in enemy hands and with intense enemy activity going on in the Mirpur area, the two lines of communications to Poonch were completely cut. Consequently Poonch was totally isolated from the rest of the World. Immediately after the States accession to the Indian Union, the enemy had set up a provisional government at Palandri. Greatly reinforced, the enemy had surrounded the posts at Bagh, Rawalakot and Majira. Neither were these any supplies available at Poonch nor was the Poonch Brigade, with all its troops committed, in a position to reach out to its posts. The answer to the problem was obviously immediate air supply of rations and ammunition directly at the posts, while a strong brigade group column from Jammu opened up the line of communication through Mirpur. Requests for both these actions were made by the Poonch Brigade Commander but unfortunately the Indian Government was not in a position to undertake either, not atleast immediately.

In the beginning of November, the garrison at Bagh under the overall command of Lt Col Maluk Singh consisted of ax company of the 8th Battalion two companies of the 7th and a company of the 4th

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2. Based on information contained in the Draft History of J&K Rifles 1963 pp 186-190.

Battalion which had just then arrived from Kohala. The enemy pressure on the garrison had been increasing ever after the fall of Domel and Muzaffarabad; the enemy having been reinforced with many deserters from the 4th Battalion. The various picquets defending Bagh had been fighting continuously for the past fortnight or so and while the expenditure of ammunition was mounting each day, there had been no replenishment, nor was there any hope of it. Rations too had begun to run out as besides the requirement of the troops, there was a considerable demand on them from thousands of refugees who had sought protection under the garrison. While the troops and the civilians were eating into the existing stocks, no replenishment was possible due to enemy activity. The frantic messages sent by the garrison imploring the Army Headquarters (Dogra) to atleast arrange for air drop of ammunition met with no response. Ultimately when the ration and ammunition situation became desperate and protection of the 12000 refugees at Bagh became next to impossible, the Army Headquarters (Dogra) issued orders for the withdrawal of the garrison along with the refugees, to Poonch. As the situation in Rawalakot was equally bad, the garrison was ordered to withdraw by any route other than through Rawalakot.

The withdrawal from Bagh commenced 7th/8th November night and in order to avoid Rawalakot, it was planned via Tolipir. Major Amar Nath Sharma led the advance guard with orders to secure Tolipir by first light on 8th November. To deceive the enemy all the camp lights were left burning while a rear guard under Lieut Mahatam Singh kept up a steady fire on the enemy to keep his attention diverted.

The enemy at Tolipir was taken completely by surprise and fled in front of the determined assault of the advance guard without even putting up a token fight. The rear guard, however, suffered several casualties while attempting to break contact with the enemy

after the main column was well on its way to Tolipir. The rearguard had again to fight a number of actions to keep the enemy from interfering with the withdrawal beyond Tolipir. The column reached Poonch at 10 a.m., on 9th November after marching through out the 8th/9th November night.

In the meantime the situation at Rawalakot had turned equally precarious. As at Bagh, it was not so much enemy action as it was the fast diminishing stocks of rations and ammunition which was making the holding of the position difficult. In fact the garrison with a strength of five companies (two of the Ist Battalion, one of the 8th and two of the 9th) was quite a formidable force which was not easy to dislodge. But a number of attacks on the garrison, particularly the one on a large scale on 19/20 October night had left its stocks of ration and ammunition very much depleted and there appeared no way of having these replenished. Besides this, there was the problem of the refugees. There were about 10,000 refugees under the protection of the garrison. This was a great moral responsibility which had to be planned for as much as any military operation. In order to ease the situation both with regard to the refugees as well as ammunition supply, a strong column consisting of two companies of the 9th Battalion and one company of the 8th Battalion moved out of Rawalakot on 27 October for evacuating some 3000 refugees to Hajira and to bring back ammunition and rations on the return trip. The refugees were successfully evacuated to Hajira but the column had to return immediately without supplies in response to an SOS call from Rawalakot which had been heavily attacked by the enemy soon after the column had left. The two companies that were left behind at Rawalakot, were now finding it difficult to hold out against repeated enemy attacks. The enemy put in his best to prevent the column from re-entering Rawalakot and it took the column three days

and three nights of hard fighting to join up with the garrison on 31 October. Thereafter the enemy started subjecting the Rawalakot defences garrison to incessant shelling and fire. With the Majira colum back at Rawalakot thedefences had no doubt become unasalable but the daily exchange of fire with the enemy, though controlled, was greatly telling upon the ammunition stock of the garrison. In response to repeated requests of the garrison for air dropping of ammunition an Indian Air Force fighter aircraft came over Rawalakot on 5th November and dropped just 1000 rounds of .303 ammunition. Of these only 600 rounds could be collected and that too after a stiff fight with the enemy involving an expenditure of more ammunition than was recovered. The Air Force evidently had problems which need not be elaborated here, but the sample of the help that could be expected of it, made it clear that it was no longer possible for the State troops to hold out at Rawalakot anymore. Consequently J&K Army Headquaters in consultation with the Indian Army J&K Force headquarters, gave the green signal to the garrison on 9th November for withdrawing to Poonch. Information having been received that the shorter route over the Majipir was strongly covered by the enemy, it was decided that the garrison withdraw by the circutous route over the Tolipur.

The column comprising all the five companies and about 6000 refugees (under Colonel Ram Lal) left camp on 9th/10th November night, duly organised into an advanced guard, main body and the rear guard. It was a long column that moved slowly not only because of the large number of refugee women and children but also because of the thirtyx stretcher cases and numerous cases of walking sick and wounded. The going was also difficult. There was virtually no track and the climb was at places so steep and precipitous that even mules found it difficult to negotiate. Indeed some of them rolled down with their loads into the nalla below. This slow moving

column, encumbered as it was with the protection of such a large number of refugees, and its offensive capability being limited due to shortage of ammunition, naturally formed a lucrative target for the blood thirsty hounds and they quickly turned on it. Consequently the advance guard had to fight on all days to keep ~~the enemy clear of~~ clear of the enemy the heights dominating the route of withdrawal, while the rear guard remained in action continuously during the entire period of the march to keep the enemy away from the refugees. Even then the enemy could not be prevented from sniping into the column from long distances which resulted in a number of casualties amon-g the troops and refugees. The column ultimately reached Poonch on 12/13 November night.

On arrival at Poonch there was to be no rest for the troops. After Rawalakot and Bagh had been vacated the enemy now concentrated his strength against Majira which was held by two companies of the Ist Battalion. On 13/14 November night the post was surrounded and subjected to heavy shelling and firing. A strong column comprising of troops who had just returned from Bagh and Rawalakot was therefore despatched immediately for the relief of Majira garrison. The enemy tried his utmost to prevent the relief column from joining the Majira garrison but the column pushed through the enemy ring and entered Majira by the afternoon of 14 November. Majira and Mudarpur garrisons together with over 3000 refugees were then withdrawn to Poonch on 16 November.

DEFENCE OF POONCH

With the withdrawal from Majira and Mudarpur all the troops of the Poonch Brigade were now concentrated in and around the town of Poonch. The units under the Brigade were :-

(a) Ist J&K Infantry less one company that was at Srinagar

(b) 9th J&K Infantry less two companies that were at Kotli

(c) Two companies of the 7th Battalion, two being under raising at Srinagar.

(d) One company plus a platoon of the 4th Battalion (Labh Singh's Column Colonel)

(e) 8th J&K Infantry

Although the Brigade looked a formidable force, in fact, it was not so. The strength of the companies was very much depleted and down to just 60 to 70 all ranks. Besides this the units were terribly short of ammunition, particularly mortar bombs. Never-the-less the Brigade was deermined to keep the enemy away from Poonch not only for strategic and tactical reasons but also because of its moral responsibility to protect the 40000 Hindu/Sikh civilian inhibitants of Poonch (including the large number of refugees that had collected there) from the barbarian. Consequently immediately on arrival, the troops were deployed to form a strong defensive ring around the town. Brigadier Krishan Singh's main problem during the deployment of his troops was the conflicting requirement of defence. To make his defence effective against enemy infilteration there was the requirement for having mutually supporting picquets all round a ~~prison~~ Poonch with small gaps between them and each strong enough to withstand a major enemy attack. With the troops that were available this requirement could be met only by forming a close ring around the town. But this conflicted with the other requirement of keeping the enemy at a safe distance from where the could not fire his weapons into the town. It goes to the credit of the Commander and his troops that eventually, through a system of offensive defence, the Poonch garrison was able to meet both the requirments. The enemy, who made contact with the defences no sooner than they were ready, was neither allowed to infilterate through gaps between picquets, which were effectively covered by intensive

patrolling, nor to dislodge any of the Brigade picquets inspite of his repeated attempts attacks that he made on them during the next five or six days before the garrison was reinforced by a battalion of the Indian Army.[3]

Uri-Poonch Link up

By the middle of November 1947, 161 Brigade under Brigadier L.P. Sen had in a spectacular move captured Uri and thus cleared the way for a link up with Poonch over the Haji Pir Pass. As soon as the capture and consolidation of Uri was completed, further advance towards Domel and Khoala Kohala was stayed, and 161 Brigade was ordered to hold Uri and prepared to send a column to Poonch along the route over the Hajipir Pir to reinforce the beleaguered Poonch garrison. This move was to be co-ordinated with the advance of 50 Para Brigade from Jammu towards Poonch via Nowshera and Rajouri, in what was to be a double pincer movement. The outline plan of 161 Brigade was to move to Poonch over the Haji Pir with two battalions leaving the third to defend Uri and on reaching Poonch, the Brigade Headquarters and one battalion was to return to Uri immediately, leaving one battalion at Poonch to make contact with 50 Para Brigade near about Kotli. This battalion of 161 Brigade was, thereafter, to operate under 50 Para Brigade in the Mirpur- Poonch area, as required.[4]

The move of 161 Brigade column to Poonch got postponed day by day as the advance of 50 Para Brigade from Jammu got delayed. The Brigade with two infantry battalions had arrived at Jammu towards the Brigadexwithxtwoxinfantryxbattalions end of October 1947, but with the priority at that time having been given to the liberation of the Kashmir Valley, it had been allotted the role of keeping the line of communication between Jammu and Srinagar open and also to reinforce 161 Brigade in case it became necessary. In fact one of

3. Ibid pp 191-192
4. Lt Gen LP Sen, Slender Was the Thread, Orient Longmans, New Delhi 1969 PP118-128 and KC Praval Valour Triumphs Thomson Press Faridabad 1976 PP 187-188

its battalions, the Ist Para(Punjab), was already at Srinagar. With the situation on the Kashmir front having improved, due to the successful operation conducted by 161 Brigade, 50 Para Brigade, in the middle of November, was allotted the task of relieving the besieged State Force Garrisons at Naoshera, Jhangar, Kotli and Mirpur. Thereafter it was to effect a link up with the Poonch garrison in a move co-ordinated with that of 161 Brigade from Uri over the Haji Pir. The commencement of the advance of 50 Para Brigade got delayed as it took time for its units to concentrate at Jammu. The first Para(Punjab) had to be flown back from Srinagar to Jammu. It was finally not before 16th November that the advance could start from Jammu. Even then the advance turned out to be painfully slow. The bad state of the road was one reason for this but even more than that was the Brigader's over-cautious moves to deal with minor opposition from the enemy. The result was that it took four days for the Brigade to make it to Jhangar, where it reached on 19th November. With its main task of relieving Kotli and Mirpur still remaining, it was quite clear that it would be many days before 50 Para Brigade could get any where near Poonch. On the other hand there was an urgent requirement for reinforcing the Poonch Garrison. It was, therefore decided that the 161 Brigade relief column move to Poonch independent of the move of 50 Para Brigade. Consequently the ~~relief~~ column comprising the tactical Headquarters of 161 Brigade, one armd armoured and one rifle troops of 7th Cavalry, 2nd Dogra, 1st Kumaon, a medical detachment, a few engineers and a detachment of the EME left Uri at 7 a.m. on 20th November for Poonch in vehicles which included some 60 civilians buses. Unfortunately, however, the Poonch Brigade was not informed of this move and as the forward elements of the column approached the bridge over the Batar Nalla, about

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4. 1969 pp 118-128 and K C Praval Valour Triumphs Thomson Press (India Ltd.) Faridabad 1976 pp 187-188.

eleven miles from Poonch, the detachment of the Garrison Police that was guarding it, mistaking own troops for the enemy, set fire to the wooden bridge before it could be crossed. This slip up on the part of some staff officer some where caused a considerable amount of hold up of the column on the other side of the Nalla before Ist Kumaon detailed for Poonch could cross over and reach Poonch. The incident also caused some heart burning between the State Forces and the Indian Army for some time before it was discovered that the Poonch Brigade had not been included in the distribution list of the J&K Force (Indian Army) operational order, directing the move of 161 Brigade.[5]

With the arrival of Ist Kumaon in Poonch the situation there eased greatly. It was not only the increase in the strength of the garrison but also that with the Indian Army taking over operational responsibility regular supply of ammunition to the garrison was assured. Some little problem regarding command and control arose because the future relationship between the State Forces and Indian Army had not yet been worked out and in keeping with the British legacy it was assumed that Indian Army troops could not be placed under the command of State Force Officers. Consequently Ist Kumaon started functioning independently of the Poonch Brigade which was commanded by Brigadier Krishna Singh, on officer of the State Force. This arrangement created some confusion, as such an arrangement was bound to, and after a month or so the Brigade was taken over by Lt Col Pritam Singh promoted local Brigadier while Brigadier Krishna Singh was posted out as the Brigadier General Staff at the J&K Army Headquarters.[6]

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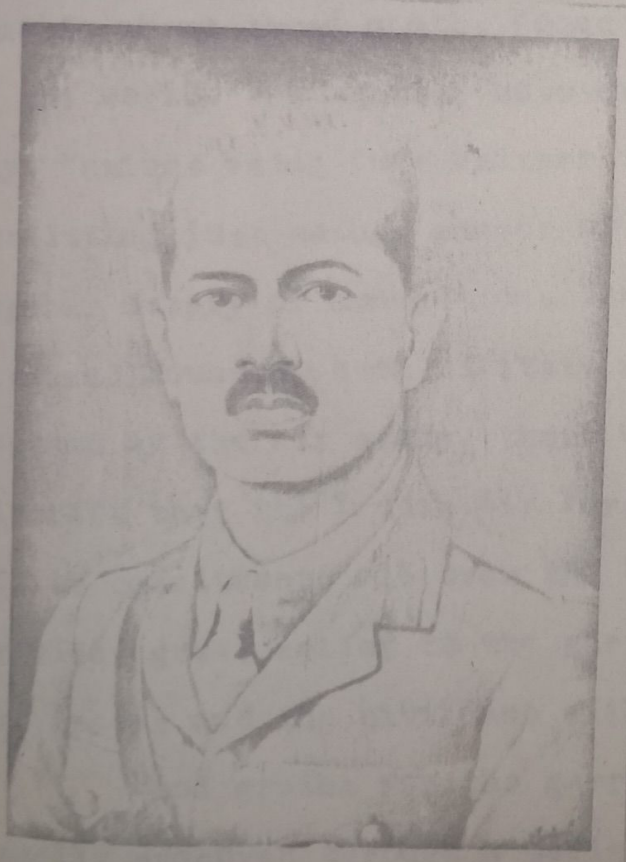
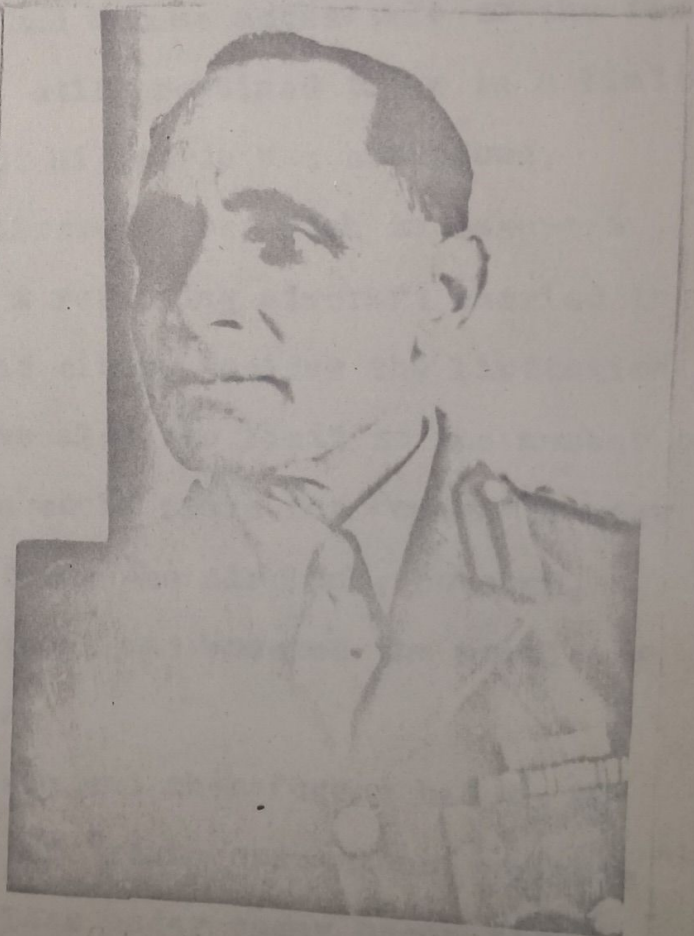
5. Ibid
6. Interview Brig Krishna Singh by the author in June 1984.

The [illegible] Fort



Brigadier Chattar Singh, [illegible]
Commander Mirpur Brigade 1947



Brigadier Kesar Singh
Commander Poonch Brigade 1947

Poonch was still cut off from the rest of the State and as as link-up by land was going to take time it was decided to link it up by air so that the garrison could be supplied with the urgently needed rations and ammunition. Consequently work was started on the construction of an air strip by the side of the Batar Nalla about a mile west of Poonch Fort. Thousands of refugees volunteered to work with the troops in the construction of this air strip and within a fortnight it was ready to take a beechcraft which was flown in on 12 December carrying Air vice Marshal Mukherjee and Air Commodore Mehar Singh. In another ten days the strip had been made fit to take in the Dakota transport aircraft and for the first time in about three months Poonch had become accessible to the rest of the world. The access, however, still remained to be in a limited way. Besides being fair weather the air strip was hazardous, permitting just enough number of aircrafts per week to ensure a regular supply of ammunition. The returning aircraft carried the sick and wounded, both military and civil. Besides the limitation imposed by the air strip, there was also the limit to the number of aircraft that the Indian Air Force could spare for Poonch in view of its commitments all over the State. The air link, however, provided great relief to the garrison, and boosted the morale of the troops and the civilians alike.[7]

Food grains for the garrison and the refugees had to be locally procured through a series of "grain operations", as this activity came to be called. A village under enemy occupation known to posses good stocks of grain was selected as the target. A company of two of infantry, accompanied by 200 to 300 refugees as guides and porters, would then set out at dusk to attack the target village at

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7. Maj Gen D K Palit Jammu and Kashmir Arms, Palit & Dutt Publishers Dehra Dun 1972 pp 210-211.

and after the villagers were dispersed, stocks of grains held in the village were carried away to Poonch. Often the guides were found from the refugees who earlier belonged to the target village and in many cases it was a case of refugees recovering their own grains.[8]

EVACUATION OF MIRPUR AND KOTLI

Even as the situation in Poonch had improved with its link up by air, the chances of its getting linked up with Jammu by land in the near future receeded due to the situation that developed during this time in the Kotli-Mirpur area.

After the withdrawal from Chechian and Dadyal at the end of October two platoons were positioned at Phala-da-Gala, one on each side of the Pass, to maintain visual communication between the outpost at Mangla and the Battalion Headquarters at Mirpur. Both these platoons remained under continuous fire of the enemy who had taken up positions on adjacent ridges. On 4 November 1947 these platoons were heavily attacked, while the vehicles bringing food for them from Mirpur was ambushed. A rescue column was rushed to Phala-da-Gala and the platoons there were withdrawn to Mirpur cutting off all communications with garrison at Mangla Mai. In the actionk before the withdrawal our casualties amounted to eight killed and nine wounded.[9]

The withdrawal of the forward platoons from Phal-da-Gala, besides cutting off all communications with the garrison at Mangla Mai, brought the enemy right to the gates of Mirpur town and the prize much coveted by the enemy now looked within his way easy reach. However his chance lay only so long as Mirpur garrison was not reinforced by the Indian Army. Knowing this he lost no time

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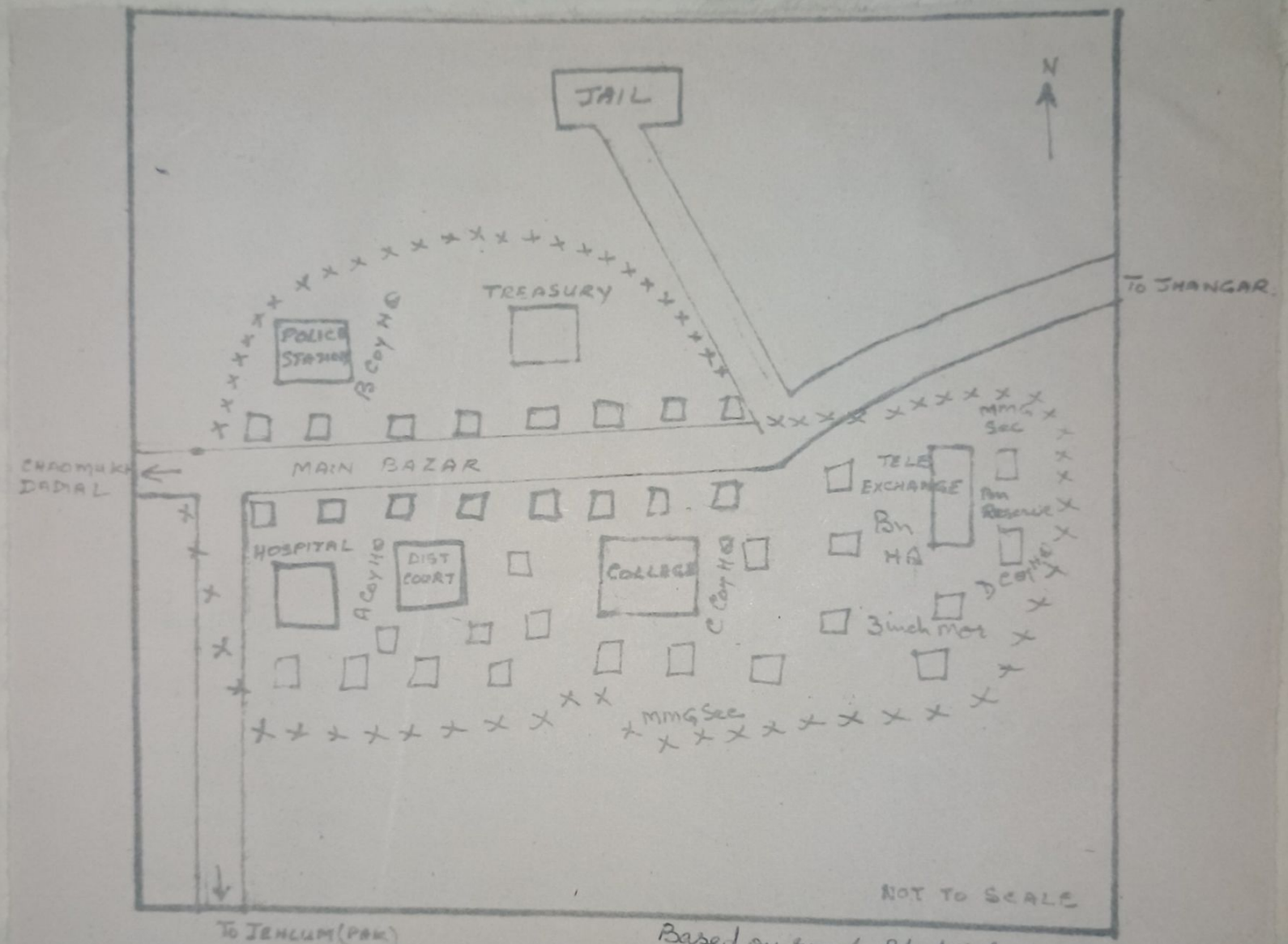
8. Ibid
9. Draft History J&K Rifles 1963 pp 200-209.

DEFENCE OF MIRPUR TOWN



Based on rough Sketch by Havilar Prem Singh (retd)

and contentrating all his might launched his first major attack on Mirpur on 6th November. On the other side the Raghunath defending the town, expecting the Indian Army help to arrive soon, were even more determined not to let Mirpur fall before the arrival of such help. The attack was beaten back with heavy losses inflicted on the enemy and so were the subsequent attacks on 10th and 11th November. The morale of the garrison got a big boost when on 12th November two fighter aircraft of the Indian Air Force effectively bombed and strafed enemy positions around Mirpur. The fighters appeared over Mirpur again on the 14th and dropped some small arms ammunition which the garrison now needed badly. Unfortunately, however, the ammunition had been losely packed and because of its impact on the ground sixty percent of the ammunition that was retrieved was was found to be unserviceable. Although next few drops after this were more successfull, the ever increasing ammunition demand of the garrison, engaged continuously in fighting, could hardly be expected to be met by air drops by fighter aircraft, whose carrying capacity was so limited. All attempts to do so were therefore suspended thereafter.[10]

The situation at Kotli was no better. The enemy had occupied all high ridges around the town and the garrison was completely besieged. Not a day passed when the garrison was not attacked or subjected to heavy fire. The enemy was being reinforced each day while the Dogra garrison was continuously losing strength because of casualities and desertions. A Muslim platoon of the 2nd Battalion which was posted on a tactical feature about a mile and half from the town had conveniently joined hands with the enemy to swell his ranks. Thereafter the rest of the Muslim company of the 2nd Battalion located at Kotli had had to be disarmed. The

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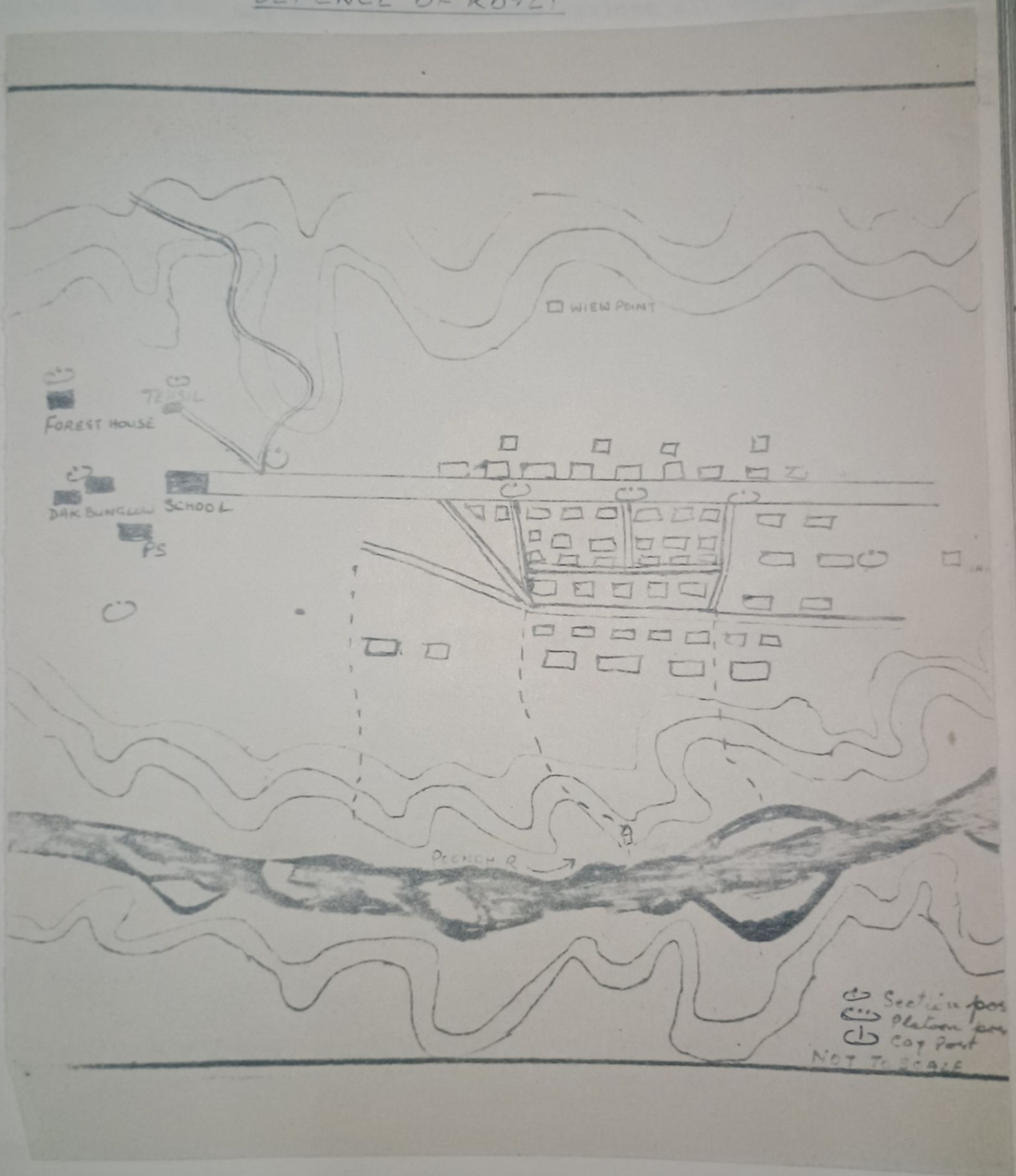
10. Ibid

DEFENCE OF KOTLI



troops that were left to defend Kotli were just about two companies of the 9th Battalion and ~~odds and sods~~ Some men of the 3rd. Never-the-less the garrison inspired by Colonel Baldev Singh Pathania and Leiut ie Colonel Shiv Ram put up a stout defence against all enemy attacks. It may be mentioned here that Colonel Baldev Singh Pathania, even though himself wounded, moved from picquet to picquet regardless of personal safety, encouraging the men to fight on. Indeed his persence proved to be a great source of strength for the garrison. The other source of strength was the hope that the Indian Army would soon come to its rescue. The first signs of Indian help appeared when in the beginning of November Indian Air Force fighters appeared over Kotli and dropped some ammunition for the garrison. The garrison had to fight hard for the ammunition so dropped but the fight proved worthwhile as 80% of the ammunition dropped was retrieved. Subsequently the fighters appeared a number of times cheering up the troops as they bombed and straffed the enemy position around Kotli[11].

The stubborn resistance that the garrison ~~was~~ was putting up must have been very frustrating for the enemy. With the possibility of the Indian Army arriving at Kotli any day, it was for him a question of now or never. Consequently the he launched a most desperate attack on 14/15 November night in which he probably put in his ~~every ounce~~ all. It was a two pronged attack on the eastern and western positions by over 3000 men under cover of medium machine guns and 3 inch mortars. The attack was particularly fierce against the eastern positions where and the enemy was able to break through the defences ~~here~~, and penetrate a portion of the town. The garrison then displayed indomitable courage and even as the enemy was engaged in burning, killing and looting of civilians, Captain Ram Prakash mustered all his meagre resources and organised a quick counter attack. Fierce hand to hand

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11. Ibid

Colonel Baldev Singh Pathania, Revenew Minister

Officers of the 9th J & K Infantry with winners of gallantry awards (VrC)

Standing L to R Capt Tagdish Singh VrC, Capt Mehatam Singh, Capt Amrit Lal, Lieut Balram Singh, Capt Abey Singh Capt Qabla Singh
Sitting L to R Capt Somant Singh, Lt Col Hira Nand VrC, Sub Kanshi Singh VrC, L/NK Janak Singh VrC, L/NK Santan VrC, Maj Sunit Singh, Capt Ram Pat

fighting reged in the narrow streets till the early hours of the morning before the enemy was finally evicted from this part of the town. The enemy who had lost over two hundred killed was apparently shaken badly by this action and thereafter his further on-slaughts on Kotli, diminished in their ferocity. A splended victory though it was for the Kotli garrison, the action had exausted its stock of ammunition down to a dangerously low level. The ration situation was already acute and each day that passed made it worse. The garrison had also run out of its stock of medicines and while the sick and wounded increased in numbers each day, less and less was available by way of medical care. Now Kotli continued to hold out despite these crippling handicaps is a great wonder.[12]

Thes enemy activity against the Mirpur Brigade during this period was not confined to Mirpur and Kotli alone. Naoshera, Rajouri and Jhangar were all under fire. Since the first week of November Naoshera had been under attack practically continuously but despite the paucity of troops, the garvison had been able to ward off all attacks. On 10th November the enemy launched a heavy attack on Beri Pattan, an out-post of the Naoshera Garrison. Beri Pattan was the most vital link on the line of communication between Jammu and Naoshera. At this place there was no bridge over the Tawi; not having been reconstructed after it had collapsed some years back. The only means of crossing the river was by a country boat which was large enough to carry upto an empty 3 ton lorry. Consequently the crossing entailed unloading of vehicles, ferrying them across empty then ferrying the loads and finally reloading of vehicles for onward move. The process made the crossing very vulnerable to enemy action. No more than a platoon of 2nd J&K Rifles from the Naoshera garrison

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12. Note on Siege of Kotli by Major Ram Parkash.

could, however, be spared for the protection of this ferry site. When the attack came a military convoy from Jammu was in the process of ferrying across. The Beri Pattan garrison under Jemadar Mejra Singh put up a stout fight but after about four hours of fighting they were over-whelmed by superior numbers and the post fell to the enemy. On receiving the news of the attack Major Angraz Singh was rushed to Beri Pattan from Naoshera with a company less platoon. He met with stiff opposition from the enemy near village Sial which greatly delayed his move to Beri Pattan and by the time he reached there, the post had already fallen and the enemy had left after looting and burning the vehicles of the convoy. Major Angraz Singh could do little else than to return to Naoshera. It was well that he did, for he reached there just in time to meet an enemy attack on Naoshera. The enemy had in fact already launched his attack and when Angrez Singh arrived, the fighting was going on at the entrance. The timely return of the company not only saved Naoshera from being rushed but also enabled the garrison to drive the enemy beyond the Tawi towards Rajalkot.[13]

Rajauri was attacked heavily on 11 November. The garrison commander Subedar Major Bhim Singh was killed fighting gallantly while the garrison was forced to withdraw alongwith a large number of refugees. Major Angrez Singh again rushed out of Naoshera with two platoons and kept the pursuing enemy at bay while the refugees made their way to Naoshera.[14]

The enemy also intensified his activities against Jhangar. Jhangar is situated on the junction of Mirpur-Jammu and Kotli-Jammu roads and its occupation by own troops was of vital importance for

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13. Notes Brig Chattar Singh

14. Ibid

the survival of both the Mirpur and Kotli garrisons. It was thus that though this narrow, uneven, valley interspersed by nallas and surrounded by small irregular hills covered with trees and shrubs, did not offer ideal opportunities for defence it was required to be held at all costs. The troops located at Jhangar for this purpose were:-

(a) two rifle companies;

(b) two duty platoons;

(c) 2 detachments of 3 inch mortars; and

(d) one section medium machine guns.

Besides the above there were the Brigade Signals, a section of Mechanical Transport, a troops of animal transport, and some medical personnel. Some local Indian Army personnel on leave had offered the their services and these, along with some civilian volunteers, were organised into two platoons which were also available for the defence of Jhangar. There being some refugees to be accomodated within the permeter, the defences had of necessity to be widely dispersed.[15]

Four permanent camp picquets A,B,C and D, each one platoon strong, formed the outer defence of the camp which in fact was the main defence as shown on the sketch opposite. The remainder of the troops which included signalers, clerks, drivers, orderlies etc were deployed on the inner perimeter (marked on the sketch with Xs). Camp reserve consisted of one platoon, and one 3 inch mortar detachment. Due to paucity of troops only weekly relief of picquets could be carried out. The outer perimeter was patrolled continuously to prevent the enemy from achieving surprise.

Since the beginning of November the main camp picquets were being attacked almost daily; 'A' and 'C' picquets being the enemy's

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15. Ibid

DEFENCE OF JHANGAR

special targets. On two occasions the attacks were so severe years so serve that picquet 'A' was almost lost to the enemy and it was shere pluck and determination of the men that enabled them to stay where they were. Daily shouts of "Dogra Bhag Jao Yahan se" by the enemy were appropriately replied by out men by shouts of "Pahile ham tunahara khoon piyen ge". The enemy had picked on 'C' Picquet on the southern side of the camp as it was some what isolated from the rest of the defences. When enemy pressure on this picquet became unbearable, offensive air support was requisitioned, which was promptly and effectively provided by Indian Air Force and the picquet withstood all enemy attacks.

The intensity and regularity of the attacks on Jhangar greatly increased between the 11th and the 19th of November. The enemy strove hard to capture this position of tactical importance before it could be reinforced by the Indian Army. The Dogras, however, proved to be men of steel and displayed tremendous grit and tenacity in defence, despite the fatigue of continued fighting and the disability suffered due to acute shortage of ammunition and rations.[16] Towards the middle of November 'A' Company of 5 J&K LI under Captain Rachhpal Singh was pulled out of the Jammu Sector and despatched to Jhangar as reinforcements.

The 50 Para Brigade, on which the State Force garrisons, struggling for existence at various posts in the Mirpur sector, had pinned their hopes, reached Jhangar on 19th November. Brigadier ~~Y S Pranjpe~~ Y S Paranjpe (Commander 50 Para Brigade), now had two alternatives with regard to the relief of the Mirpur and Kotli garrisons. One was to relieve both simultaneously, and the other to go for them one by one. There was an urgent need for relieving both the places at the earliest as both the garrisons were equally at their tethers and and could fall any moment, leaving the refugees, men, women, and

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16. Ibid

children to the mercy of a barbarous enemy. Alternative one was, therefore, the answer. This however, required the splitting up of the force and Brigadier Paranjpe would have none of this. So strong was his belief in the old maxim of keeping the force concentrated and hitting hard at one place that inspite of the irregular nature of the enemy that opposed him, he decided to relieve Kotli and Mirpur one by one and accept the risk of one of them falling while he was in the process of relieving the other; much against the advice of Brigadier Chatter Singh and Brigadier NS Rawat who were better in the know of the situation.[17] Priority was given to Kotli though Mirpur being the second largest town in the Jammu province and containing a larger civil population, perhaps deserved it more. To keep Mirpur from falling before it could be relieved, 10 boxes of 3 inch mortar bombs 5 boxes of 2 inch mortar bombs and 25000 rounds of small arms and ammunition was dropped to the garrison by means of parachute by a Dakota escorted by fighter aircraft. This time the ammunition was received in-tact.[18]

The 1/2 Punjab along with 'A' Company 5 J&K LI advanced towards Kotli on 20 November but found its passage blocked at it approached Dungi. When Commander Mirpur Brigade who was accompanying the column found that the battalion was still stuck at Dungi four days after the commencement of the advance from Jhanger, he appreciated that at this rate it may become too late for 50 Para Brigade to relieve Mirpur. Consequently on 23rd November he sent a most immediate message to Army Headquarters(Dogra) - requesting it to arrange a separate column for the relief of Mirpur garrison which was now in a desperate position. Apparently the commander 50 Para Brigade was still not prepared to divide his force and the matter remained where it was- the relief column stuck at Dungi while both

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17. Notes Brig Chatter Singh and Brig NS Rawat.

18. Maj Gen DK Palit p 171

the state force garrisons were engaged in a life and death struggle. The column finally reached Kotli on 26 November after seven days operations to learn that Mirpur had fallen a day earlier. On 27 November Kotli was evacuated and the State Force garrison there along with the State's Revenue Minister ~~Col~~ Colonel Baldev Singh Pathania and nearly 8000 refugees were brought safely to Jhanger.[19]

The fall of Mirpur had been most tragic. Apart from the fact that Mirpur presented a heart rending story of suffering by thousands of innocent men, women and children at the hands of an enemy that surpassed all earlier records ~~precedences~~ of sadism and cruelty generally perpetrated by a savagely victor on the vanquished, ~~that the fall of Mirpur formed~~, it was ironical that Mirpur fell after 50 Para Brigade had reached Jhangar. The total strength of the Mirpur garrison under Lieut Colonel Puran Singh ~~Thapa~~ Thapa then was about 610 men (including the garrison of 31 at Mangla Mai) of the Raghunath Battalion and one platoon of local militia attached to it, but the fighting strength at Mirpur proper did not exceed ~~about~~ 560 men.[20] Of these about 250 were employed on the defence of Mirpur, 165 on camp defence and the remainder were organised into the garrison reserve. When the ammunition was air dropped on 19th November the existing ammunition with the garrison was down to about 15 rounds per man. The additional 25000 rounds that were received by the garrison as a result of air supply were not too many for fighting a prolonged action but they boosted the morale of the garrison tremendously. The very thought of being relieved soon made the men fight with renewed vigour when the enemy launched a massive attack on 20 November. The enemy manage to break through the defences into the south-west portion of the city but he was evicted after the garrison reserve under Captain Pramod Singh and Lieut Kishan Singh of 5th Battalion now incharge militia platoon

19. ~~Major~~ Brig Chatter Singh, notes
20. Ibid

of exservicemen was went into action and engaged the enemy in a hand to hand fight lasting all night. The garrison lost five men killed and same number wounded while the enemy is believed to have suffered about 100 casualties in killed and wounded. Unfortunately, however, the only wireless set with the garrison, went out of order just then and the garrison lost all touch with the rest of the world with effect from 21st November. To the garrison's dismay own air activity against the enemy also declined thereafter. The enemy now became bolder and during the next two days attacked both during night as well as day.[21]

On 24 November came the final blow when the enemy, about a battalion strong supported by artillary and 3 inch mortar fire, put in a dawn attack on the south-western part of the city. The attack was the heaviest witnessed so far, and concentrated as it was against one post, it was obviously much heavier than the post could bear. Nevertheless the post put up a most spirited resistance, and it was only after about six hours continuous fighting, during which the enemy attacked wave after wave, that this portion of the defence was over run and enemy entered the town. The garrison reserve battled hard to plug the breach and evict the enemy but this one platoon strength was too small a force for the Herculean task. Soon all the posts were under heavy attack and while they were engaged in defending themselves, the posts were under heavy the greater part of the city was in flames, as more and more of the enemy poured into it through the breach that had been created at the south-western end. It is difficult to describe the pitiable state which the civil population found themselves in. Few could escape the mad orgy of murder and rapine let loose by the enemy in the

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21. Unit History (3 KAR) 1947-48 compiled by Captain Shiam Singh Forwarded to Brig Krishna Singh vide DO 28/1/G of 17 Feb 1954.

part of the city he had captured, while those in other parts of the city panicked and ran to the garrison camp for protection. There was a glimmer of hope when that day a fighter aircraft of the Indian Air Force appeared in the sky over Mirpur at 11 a.m. and then again at 1 p.m. but each time hope turned into despair as the aircraft turned away without doing anything for lack of communication with the garrison.[22]

With no hope of reinforcements reaching Mirpur ~~before it fell completely into enemy hands~~ being now imminent and its fall, Lieut Colonel Thappa in consultation with the Wazir Wazarat of Mirpur, Rao Rattan Singh, decided to evacuate Mirpur and save as many of the civil population as possible by escorting them out of the town to Jhangar. About 18000 civilians had gathered at the garrison headquarters and of these about 3000 were incapable of undertaking the journey. Majority of them committed suicide, (in many cases after killing their own family members), after they learnt that the town was going to be abandoned, and only about 15000 refugees accompanied the military column when it moved out of Mirpur at about 10 a.m. on 25 November. A lot many more who could not reach the garrison headquarters were unfortunately left behind ~~and~~ to fall prey to the wolves. Fortunately the Air Force fighters made a God-Sent appearance over Mirpur just as the column was moving out of the town and so hammered the enemy positions that he was unable to follow the column in pursuit. Thereafter during the whole day of the march towards Jhangar the fighters remained constantly over the column to be able to render fire support by observation. The column was, therefore, able to make a clean break with the enemy and marched safely during the day, even though moving slowly and remained stretched over a length of more than

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22. Ibid

five miles. Asthe march progressed the column got lengthened more and more; becoming ever more difficult to control.[23]

The enemy caught up with the column at Kas Guma by 9 p.m. that night, and suddenly opened fire with automatic weapons. Although the enemy was not allowed by the troops to get anywhere near the refugees the fire created a lot of panic among them and nearly two thousand of them ran out of the protection box in confusion; never to return again. After the enemy was driven back, the column resumed advance during the night, but being warned of enemy positions enroute, it took to moving across country guided by some local muslims. By morning the column had got spread over the about ten miles. Consequently the troops were organised into small groups and distributed throughout the column, for the protection of women and children who were begining to lag behind. The column was now guided by an elderly local muslim who very faithfully steered the column away from enemy positions right upto Jhangar. Nevertheless the enemy continued to persue and attack the rear of the column; the rear guard having to fight hard to keep the enemy away from the tail of the column.[24]

The head of the column reached Jhangar at about 7 p.m. on 26th November while the rear was still 12 miles away. Parties were then sent out from Jhangar with cooked meals to meet the refugees some miles away. The refugees then kept on pouring into Jhangar in batches, each escorted by a small detatchment of troops, for the next next two days. Unfortunately Major Ram Saran Karki, Captain Parmodh Sigh, Captain P. N. Kanwar (Medical Officer) Lieut Kishan Singh Subedar Major Saran Dass and about 15 other ranks who formed part of the rear guard never returned; having been killed fighting a rear

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23. Ibid
24. Ibid

guard action on 26 November. The total number of casualties suffered by the 3rd Battalion during the fighting at Mirpur was 40 officers 2 JCOs and 74 other ranks killed and 20 other ranks wounded.[25]

50 Para Brigade also returned to Jhangar from Kotli on 26 November. It now assumed operational responsibility of the area while the Mirpur Brigade was wound up at Jhangar. All the refugees from Mirpur, Kotli and Jhangar were formed into a column and escorted by the State Force troops, who had come from Mirpur and Kotli, the column moved towards Jammu on 29 November. At Nowshera a few more thousands of refugees were added to the column taking the total to about 20,000 in all. About 100 civilian trucks were used for transporting women and children and the entire column was in Jammu by 2nd December.[26] Thereafter commenced the reorganisation and refitting of the 2nd and the 3rd Battalions and within a month or so the Raghunaths and the Body Guards were on their feet again. Unfortunately the 2nd Battalion suffered heavily once again when its positions at Beri Pattan were shelled intensely by a Pakistani battery ~~of 2 Pakistani~~ & Muslim Regiment, ~~hours on end in~~ for two days during the last phase of the war in December 1948. The Raghunaths, ofcourse, went on to earn fresh laurits for themselves as we still presently see.

The Heroic Fight by the Mangla Mai Garrison

Even after the fall of Mirpur the garrison of the Raghunath continued to hold out at Mangla Mai fort. The Garrison here consisted of one platoon of the 3rd Battalion under Jamadar Khajoor Singh and a Havildar (Ishri Singh) and three other ranks of the Fort establishment. Besides these, there were some fifty two civilian

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25. Ibid
26. ~~Notes~~ Brig Chatter Singh, notes

refugees, including Zaildar Girdhari Lal, who has taken shelter in the fort. This fort is situated about ten miles south west of Mirpur and on the bank of Jehlum river which forms the State's boundary borders with Pakistan. With the withdrawal of the post at Phala-da-Gala, Mangla Mai had got completely cut off from the Battalion Headquarters at Mirpur but the garrison had continued to hold out against all enemy attacks. After the fall of Mirpur on 25 November (not that Jemadar Khajoor Singh was aware of such a thing having happened), the enemy intensified his attacks on Mangla Mai using 3" mortars and medium machine guns but Jemadar Khajoor Singh, even though aware of Mirpur having fallen, remained determined to hold out as long as was possible, in the hope of some help arriving some time. The ammunition problem was solved by making an ingenuine use of the ample supply of gun powder inside the fort. The gun powder mixed with pebbles and stones was fired through muzzle loading guns in the fort, and while the stones went flying dangerously upto a range of about 100 yards, the great bang that was created had a demoralising effect on the enemy; enough to keep him away from the from fort. Like this he continued to fight even when the rations were practically exausted and the pond within the fort from which drinking water was obtained had dried up. While the ~~fort from which drinking~~ troops then ate just enough to keep alive, their minimum requirement of water was met by obtaining it stealthily at night from a source outside the fort which was covered by enemy machine guns. Four civilians had already been killed while attempting to fetch water from this source. The Fighters aircraft of the Indian Air Force did render some help but they visited not more than twice in a fortnight and did the strafing from too great xa height.[27]

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27. Unit History Compiled by Captain Shiam Singh

On 24 December a month after Mirpur had fallen the enemy brought forward an artillery piece which enabled him to smash the gate and also create a large breach in the wall of the fort. The garrison rushed forward to plug the gap and succeeded in preventing the enemy from overwhelming the post. However, by 5.30 p.m. it became apparent that the garrison would not be able to hold out too long. Consequently the men along with the civilians tried to escape from the fort during the night but while in the process they were all captured and made prisoners. After being kept in the fort for the next twenty days they were moved to Alibeg. Here they stayed for ten months during which time Havildar Jamit Singh and Naik Ram Dass made an unsuccessful attempt to escape from captivity and got killed. After their stay at Alibeg they were transferred to Attok from where they were finally repatriated to India on 25 May 1950.[28]

SITUATION IN THE JAMMU SECTORY

After the State's accession to the Indian Dominion, the Pakistanis intensified their activities in the Jammu Sector also. Besides the general increase in the number of raids on the State's border villages, Pakistan launched regular attacks on Bhimber which fell within the beat of a squadron of the Body Guard Cavalry. Commanded by Captain Prithi Singh, the squadron put up heroic resistance for some time but when finally the enemy attacked with armoured cars* and guns, it was forced to vacate the town and withdraw to Sunder Mani via Sai Saidabad. Captain Gandharab Singh (retired) who was commanding a platoon of volunteers at Bhimber was killed fighting gallantly.[29]

The biggest raid across the border came in the beginning of November when over a thousand Pakistanis swooped down on Gadansu, about eleven miles north-west of Jammu. A platoon from Akalpur was

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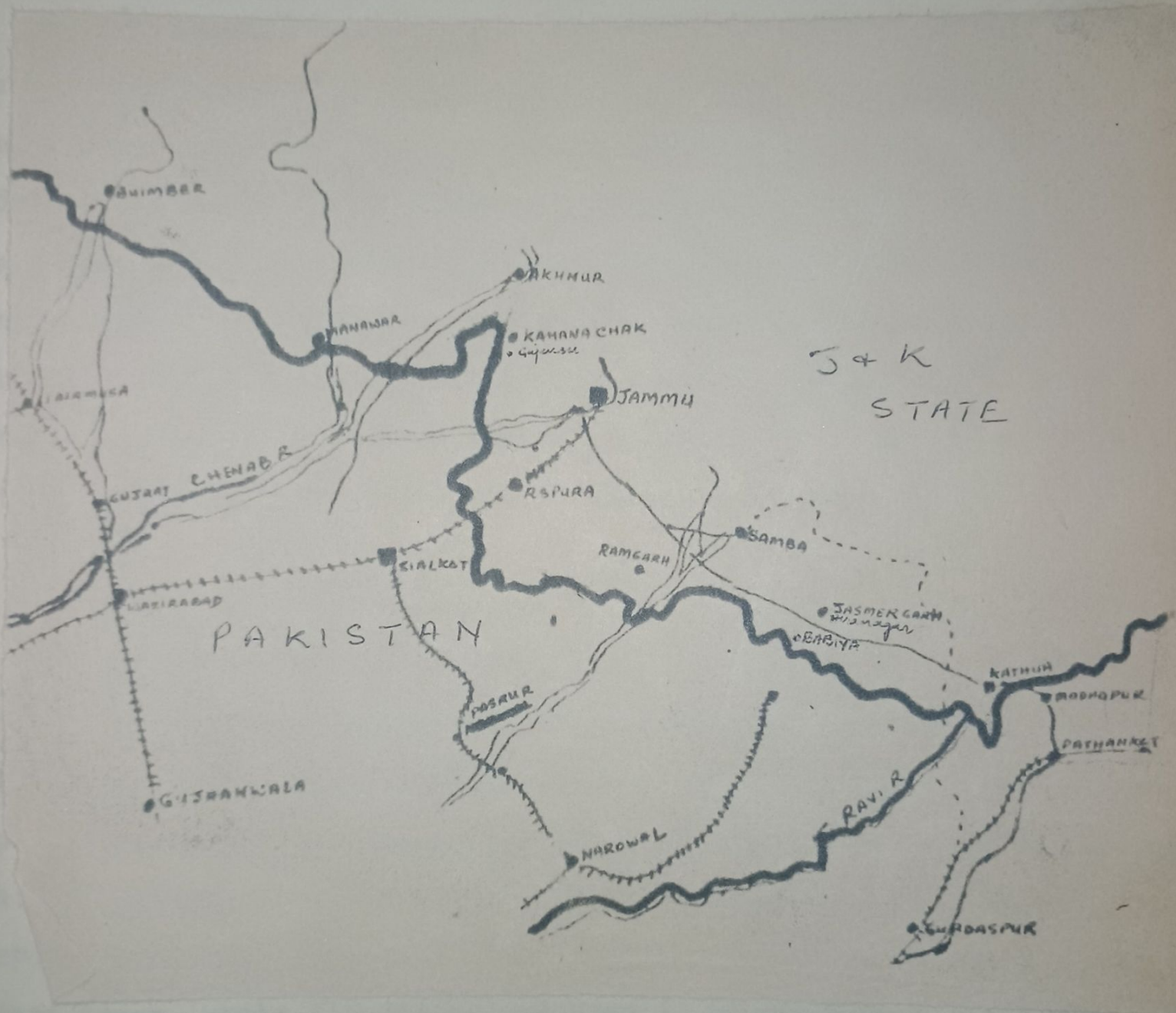
28. Ibid

29. Notes Brig Chatter Singh

* Probably Bren Carriers were mistaken for armoured cars

THE JAMMU SECTOR



Mark Bahya, Gajansu, Devigarh.

hastily despatched to the scene but it proved ineffective in face of the overwhelming numbers of the enemy. By the time reinforcements arrived from Jammu, Gajensu and the surrounding villages had been thoroughly ransacked, hundreds of innocent villagers massacred and the women abducted.[30]

In the middle of November the platoon post at Devigarh was besieged by about five hundred Pakistanis from across the border, armed with brenguns and light automatics. The post was then subjected to a series of attacks each one of which was successfully repulsed including the last one during which the enemy was able to penetrate the defenses to a dangerous extent. Fortunately reinforcements in the form of a company from Arnia had arrived in the nick of time to attack the enemy in his rear. This had forced the enemy to leave his attack unfinished and flee across the border to safety.[31]

SKARDU REINFORCED

Although the Indian Army had arrived in Srinagar in strength when major Thappa's frantic message requesting for reinforcements were were being received, the J&K Force was not in a position to take on operations in this mountainous region, as its priority lay in driving out the raiders from the valley. The responsibility for providing troops to reinforce Skardu, therefore, continued to remain with the State Force, even while the operations were to be conducted under the directions of the Indian Army. The State Force at that time hardly had any troops available for the task but some thing had to be done. An all out drive was therefore made to muster every available man-orderlies, storemen (from rear depots of units fighting on the front) and bandsmen etc- at Srinagar and with the shelp of one company of the 4th Battalion under Captain Prabhat Singh and some odds and sods

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30. Draft History J&K Rifles
31. Ibid. The date of attack not clear - mid nov or mid oct. Draft gives it as mid November but position of incident makes it appear to be mid october, needs verification.

flown in from Jammu a company plus was hastily organised. The whole column was put under the command of Captain Prabhat Singh who was given two young officers, Lieutenants Ajit Singh and Bhagat Singh, to assist him and it finally moved out of Srinagar for Skardu on 13 January 1948.[32]

The column covered the distance of about 25 miles between Srinagar and Kangan by bus. As it was not possible for vehicles to ply beyond this, owing to the many feet of snow on the road, the column had to start its long march on foot from Kangan itself. From Kangan to Sonamarg the going over the snow was difficult but it was to be nothing compared with the perilous journey that lay ahead. Between Baltal and Kargil alone there lay a fifty mile stretch of mountainous country, traversing which entailed the formidable task of crossing the 11000 feet high Zojila pass in the dead of winter.[33]

At Sonamarg the column split up into its sub units, for making the further advance by batches in view of the limited accommodation available at the halting stages enroute. Porters and guides were procurred at Sonamarg with the greatest of difficul-ty as not many local were prepared to risk their lives in crossing the dreadful Zojila at this time of the year, for which there was no earlier precedence. The first batch left Sonamarg at 9 a.m. and reached Baltal by 1 p.m. Here they had a hurried lunch and a tot of rum before making their assault on Zojila. The three miles climb beyond Baltal and upto the pass was not only stiff but also hazardous to the extreme.[34] It entailed marching over a series of ridges and across nallas, tracks over which had been obliterated

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32. Ibid
33. Ibid
34. Ibid

completely by many feet of snow. Going had naturally to be slow as each individual had to walk on the foot prints of the man in front and a step to the right or left would take the man chest deep in snow. Added to this was the intense cold (mercury dipping well below minus 40°C) which the men had to bear without snow clothing and which caused many casualties among troops including one sepoy of the first batch who died of cold, The troops set an example of comradeship by carrying the dead body many miles to where it could be properly cremated, even as they themselves dragged painfully, foot by foot through snow which was waist deep at places. The casualties due to frost bite were left behind at the various stages till they were fit to join any of the batches that followed.[35]

After the arduous journey of about one hundred and twenty miles by each batch, the column assembled at Kargil by 01 February. There after it reorganised and prepared itself for the next lap of the advance to Skardu, about ninty eight miles away. It finally left Kargil in three batches, one after the other each under an officer; the first batch under Captain Prabhat Singh leaving on 5 February 1948. The going from Kargil to Skardu was easy and was covered in the usual five stages- Olding, Bagicha, Tolti, Parkuta, and Gol. As the track admitted the use of animal transport the column was no longer dependent solely on porters and full use was made of local yaks and ponies. Neither of the batches met with enemy opposition, and but for the four bridges dismantled by Pakistani agents (one at Parkuta and three between Gol and Skardu), which the first batch had to repair for crossing over, the journey from Kargil to Skardu remained uneventful for all the batches. Fire works were, however, to started at Skardu as soon as the first batch reached there.

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35. Ibid

The first batch under Captain Prabhat Singh reached Skardu on 10th February, not a day too soon, for even as Prabhat Singh's men were being rested for the night following their arrival, Skardu was attacked by the enemy in strength during the early hours of the morning. It was then found that the Muslim platoon of the Skardu garrison had deserted and joined hands with the enemy and it was only by employing the new arrivals that Major Thapa was able to save the situation. The attack which was supported by 3 inch mortars and medium machine guns was most decisively beaten back. The fighting had lasted nearly six hours during which the defenders carried out some offensive manoeuvres resulting in the enemy suffering 10 killed and one wounded, who was taken prisoner. Substantial quantities of arms and ammunition, which included a medium machine gun, some rifles and a 2 inch mortar, were captured.[36] The garrison suffered seven killed and sixteen wounded. Frustrated, the enemy then turned his wrath on Skardu town, a portion of which lay outside the defence perimeter and indulged in brutal killing of Hindus and Sikh civilians and looting of their property. Fortunately many members of the minority community including the Wazir Wazarat, Shri Amar Nath, were able to escape the clutches of these brutes and they all ran into the defensive perimeter for protection.[37]

The attack on Skardu had come as a complete surprise and the garrison was at a loss to understand how this was possible when Tsari which was on the route of enemy's advance was being held by

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36. The draft history of J&K Rifles on which this narrative is based gives a wrong impression that the garrison was besieged within the fort and that at the time of the attack the men of the garrison "rushed to their respective posts on the wall of the fort". The same impression has been created by Lt Gen LP Sen in Slender was the Thread (p 191) and Maj Gen DK Palit in Jammu & Kashmir Arms p 233. This impression is erroneous and needs to be categorically dispelled. The correct position is that except for the platoon that was located inside the fort, all the defences were outside it.

37. Draft History J&K Rifles

DEFENCE OF SKARDU

two platoons of the Battalion. Later it transpired that the enemy, on coming to know that Skardu was being reinforced decided to hasten up his plans for attack. Consequently the enemy, making use of the Muslim deserters of the 6th Battalion, made contact with the Muslim platoon on the right bank of the Indus at Tsari and won it over in the name of religion and the holy war. The Sikh platoon on the near bank was then surprised and annihilated before it could send a warning to the Skardu garrison. Most of the platoon had died fighting but some who were overwhelmed were taken prisoner and then killed in cold blood by the Muslims of their own Battalion in a most despicable and disgraceful manner. Captain Krishan Singh was among those who were killed in this destardly manner after being taken prisoner. All this had happened on 10 February while the garrison at Skardu slept blissfully, with a sense of security that turned out to be false.[38] Although the treacherous tactics employed by the enemy had brought him to Skardu much faster than he could have otherwise done, he had certainly lost the race and had attacked Skardu on 11th February, after it had been reinforced, only to get a bloody nose.

On 13th February arrived the second batch of reinforcements some 70 strong under Lieut Ajit Singh which was followed by the third batch of the same size ~~under Lieut Bhagat Singh~~, two days later. With this the over all strength of the Skardu garrison, which had been greatly depleted on account of desertions by the Muslim element, now rose to 285 all ranks. Even then the strength was too meagre for organising an effective defence of Skardu town. The defence perimeter had of necessity to be narrow to the exclusion of some important features such as Pt 8853, which overlooked the

Two medium machine guns at Kargil under Lieutenant Bhagat Singh for want of the required number of porters.

What was most unfortunate was the reinforcements Column had had to leave its Such mortars and

38. Ibid

town, and afforded a wide all-round view for miles. The activity of the garrison was thus restricted to intensive patrolling on a radius of 5 miles all round. On the other hand the strength of the enemy was growing day by day, as his reinforcements poured in from Bunji and Gilgit. The frequency and the intensity of his attacks also increased as days went by, which, though beaten back with the same determination with which they were made, had begun to all tell heavily on the manpower and ammunition resources of the garrison; casualties mounting and ammunition stocks receeding after each attack. The ration stocks were also falling and with no hope of these being ever replenished, rationing had to be resorted to; leaving the men weak, under nurished and sick, as the seale of ration per man went down with the passing of each day. Then while the number of the sick increased daily, more and more remained medically uncared for as they stocks of essential medicines dwindled. The men bore all these privations with fortitude in the hope that they would be joined by the Indian Army and using Skardu as a base, be able to recapture Gilgit, for the annexation of which their forefathers had shed so much blood, It was this spirit that made even the sick and the wounded to man their trenches as long as they were in a condition to sit. No one could, however, expect the garrison to continue like this for long. Major Thapa took pains to make this point clear and continued to send urgent requests for reinforcements.[39]

ABORTIVE ATTEMPTS TO REINFORCE SKARDU

The Force could not have been unaware of the critical position that the Skardu garrison was in but as has been noted earlier it had priorities else where. The best it could do in

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39. Ibid

response to the frantic requests from Skardu was to order Brigadier Faqir Singh, Commander Kashmir Brigade to organise a column from whatever troops of the State Force that had become available at Srinagar and lead it to Skardu himself. Strangely a brigadier was chosen to command a column which with the best of efforts could not be built up to more than two and a half platoons strong. Even more strangely the obnoxious practice of the British days seems to have been revived by attaching one Indian Army Officer, Major Coutes, to the Column as a sort of special service officer of the bye gone days. The men of the column were totally ill equipped and ill clothed for operations in high altitudes. For fire support the column had just two medium machine guns and two 2 inch mortars.[40]

The column left Srinagar on 16 February 1948 and crossed Zojila on the 24th. After a halt of 3 days at Dumri for reinforcing its porter strength, which had been depleted due to desertions and deaths, the column arrived at Kargil on 1st March. Another few days were then spent at Kargil in arranging porters and animal transport, whereafter the column, reinforced by a platoon from the State Force garrison at Kargil, commenced its onward march to Skardu on 8 March. Unfortunately its only wireless set had gone out of order and there being no facility for having it set right, it was unceremoniously left behind at Kargil.

Gol was reached without a mishap on 16 March and the column started on its last lap of the Journey to Skardu the next day. The link up now seemed certain and the troops marched with high morale despite the arctic climatic conditions and the hazardous going over steep and narrow track between Gol and Thergo. Little did they

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40. ~~Moten~~ Brig Faqir Singh, notes

realise that the worst was yet to come. As the column was passing through the narrow defile at Thergo it was ambushed by the enemy ~~up~~ who opened up devastating fire from medium and light machine guns from the various ridges dominating the defile. Caught in the open the men hastily took up positions behind whatever little cover that was available but not before the enemy had taken a heavy toll of lives-32 killed and 18 wounded. The wounded included Brigadier Faqir Singh; a bullet having pierced his left cheek and shoulder. Fortunately the troops had not panicked and even though occupying positions lower than that of the enemy they returned the fire with some effect which prevented the enemy from assaulting them. The fire fight continued the whole day during which time the column remained completely pinned down and it was only at night fall that the column could extricate itself from this veritable death trap. The ill fated column then retreated leaving behind its dead and, marching the whole night and the next day, it reached ~~Tixti in the~~ Tolti in the evening of 18 March. It arrived at Kargil on the 21st where the wounded received first aid at the civil dispensary. Brigadier Faqir Singh was evacuated to the military hospital at Srinagar after he had handed over charge of the battered column to Major Coutes.[41]

The fact that the column had had to turn back after reaching so close to Skardu was most tragic. The tragedy was all the more heightened after it became known that the Skardu garrison had sent out two platoons under Lieut Ajit Singh (accompanied by ~~Colonel~~ Major Thapa himself) towards Gol to receive the relief column half way, but unfortunately this was done on 18 March which happen-ed to be a day too late. The error in the timming of the move had

41. Ibid

taken place due to the garrison having been mistakenly informed that Brigadier Faqir Singh was to reach Skardu on the 18th. This error which had such far reaching effect on the operation would not have taken place if Brigadier Faqir Singh had been in communication with Skardu or his rear. There were of course many other 'ifs'. For instance if the column had moved tactically and secured the heights before moving through the defile or if after extricating itself from the area of the ambush it had stayed at Gol (rather than racing all the way back to Kargil) and then made a fresh attempt at reaching -ing Skardu (after having learnt from earlier mistakes), the course of history might have been different. It must, however, be conceded that these 'ifs' are a result of the advantage we have of the hind sight. One may nevertheless wonder what advice Major Coutts had been offering to Brigadier Faqir Singh at this time.

The disappointment of the column from Skardu (that had gone to receive the relief column) on learning from the locals that Brigadier Faqir Singh had turned back only a day earlier can well be imagined. Crest fallen it returned to Skardu. On its way back it was also ambushed but it fought out of it without suffering a single casualty.

The enemy decided to celebrate the return of Brigadier Faqir Singh's column with a fierce attack on the Skardu defences at 3 a.m. on 28 March. The attack was, however, stoutly resisted and it soon fizzled out. A heavier attack was then launched at 5 a.m. the same day. This attack was also contained and in the fire fight that lasted the whole day the defenders got the better of the attackers with regards to the casualties inflicted. But the enemy was not prepared to give up so soon. Skardu had become a thorn in his neck and was the only obstacle in his plan for launching his offensive against Ladakh. Time was also of the

greatest importance for him. Once Skardu was reinforced his chance of ~~the~~ capturing it would greatly recede, if not totally come to naught. Having failed to make an impression on the defenders during the day's fighting, the enemy decided to concentrate his entire ~~mite~~ strength against one or two piequets and thus break through the defences. The piequets ~~and~~ so selected for extermination during the attack on 29/30 March night were the School picquet and the Raja piequet commanded by Captain Ajit Singh and Jemadar Piar Singh respectively. The piquets had, infact, been surrounded by the enemy and cut off from the rest of the defences since the 28th when the enemy launched his first attack. They had also been subjected to heavy shelling and firing since that day; receiving more than ~~20~~ 50 mortar bombs a day. It was the third day of his attack when the enemy launched an assault on 29/30 March night, getting dangerously close to the defences; particularly at the School piquet. Both the piquets, however, fought doggedly, frustrating all attempts of the enemy to make a breach in the defences. Whatever little hope the enemy may still have had of succeeding in his venture was shattered when at dawn Major Thappa launched a counter attack and dislodged the enemy from the positions he had taken up close to the defences; inflicting heavy casualties on him with twenty having been counted dead.[42] Captain Ajit Singh and Jemadar Piar Singh were subsequently awarded Vir Chakra each for the patience, courage and ~~the~~ a exemplary leadership displayed by them under the most trying circumstances.

During this all out attack the enemy had suffered heavy losses and was forced to take some time off for licking his wounds. He, therefore, made no further attempt on Skardu till 7th April when he again put in a concerted attack. The enemy was, however, humbled by the defenders once again and he gave it up as a bad job.

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42. Draft History J&K Rifles and citation for the award of Vir Chakra to Capt Ajit Singh.

What had made the defences impregnable was the flawless siting of weapons, strengthening of the roofs of bunkers to withstand 3 inch mortar fire, and a well thought out defensive fire plan. But the most most important factor behind this pertinacious resistance was the indomitable spirit of the defenders who despite the critical situation that they were in, with regard to ammunition and rations, gave the enemy a bloody nose every time he poked it forward. Tactically, however, it may have been more advantageous for the garrison to fall back on Kargil and make a stand there. Lieut Colonel Thapa (since promoted) had in fact made a suggestion to this effect some time back but as J&K Force Hq wanted to hold on to Skardu, the garrison was now determined to fight it out here to the bitter end.[43]

The failure of Brigadier Faqir Singh's column had atleast made one point clear- that committing troops in this region in small adhoc unit and sub units would not do. It was therefore decided to send a strong column for reinforcing the Skardu garrison. As no Indian Army troops could still be spared for this operation, the State Force, was again asked to provide the necessary man power for the proposed column. Consequently the 5th J&K Light Infantry and two companies of the 7th Battalion were detailed. The two companies (Dogra) of the 7th that were at that time already at Srinagar and were therefore despatched to Kargil under Captains Durga Singh and Davindar Singh even as the 5th Battalion was being moved from Jammu to Srinagar, after it had been relieved in the Jammu sector by the revamped 3rd Battaion. The 5th Battalion less one company arrived Srinagar by air while the fourth company moved up by road; some of its elements being detained at Ramsu and Banihal for the protection of the Highway from Srinagar. 's' Company under Captain Sharda Singh and 'D' Company plus a platoon o

43. Ibid

'A' Company under Captain Tej Ram were despatched to Kargil one after the other. In the meantime the two companies of the 7th Battalion accompanied by Major Coutee (who was once again to act as an adviser to the column), had moved right upto Parkuta and were waiting there for the 5th Battalion to join up to form the 'Biscuit Column'(as the combined column was to be nick-named) for further operations.[44]

The 'B' Company of the 5th Battalion accompanied by Lieut Colonel (local) Sampuran Bachan Singh (who was to act as the senior adviserto the 'Biscuit Column') had no difficulty in moving from Kargil to Parkuta, but before 'B'Company, that followed, could join up, the enemy had established himself south of Parkuta and thus blocked the way. The Company made some attempt to dislodge the enemy but with no supporting weapons with it, the attacks made no headway and Captain Tej Ram was forced to take up a defensive position there waiting for the rest of the Battalion to come up. As a matter of fact a column led by the Battalion Commander himself was following not too far behind. However, what Colonel Kripal Singh was bringing up was just the Battalion Headquarters and the support elements;the two remaining companies, 'A' under Captain Rachhpal Singh and 'C' under Captain Kashmir Singh,being stuck up at Sonamarg and Dras respectively.for want of ponies/porters for their move forward. These companies were,infact,never able to join their Battalion and while Kashmir Singh was forced to take up a permanent defensive position at Dras,Rachhpal Singh ultimately got involved in fighting in the Zojila-Machoi area.It is some consolation that in the enemy clearing operations conducted in the area under 1st Patiala,'A' Company earned two Vir Chakra(L/NK Dhani Ram and Sepoy Jagat Ram) and two Mentioned in Despatches(Captain Rachhpal Singh and Havilder Fqir Singh).

On his way up Colonel Kripal Singh met Sampuran Bachan Singh at Bagicha,who informed him that he had been recalled and was now on his way back to ~~the~~ his unit. Further on at Tolti he met Major Coutee /who was on his way back to Kargil to established his head-quarters(whatever that meant) there. The role of these 'SS De' had never been defined and evidently on Colonel Kripal Singh representing, the absurdity of the situation had been realised and they had been tactfully withdrawn.[45]

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44. Ibid.
45. Interview Lt Col Rachhpal Singh
Interview Lt Col Kripal Singh

Left to himself Colonel Kripal Singh collected some 400 porter with the help of the Raja of Tolti and left for Parkuta on 10th May 1948 which, unfortunately for him, also happened to be the day chosen by the enemy for launching his offensive against Ladakh. Having been unable to capture Skardu, the enemy, in order not to waste any more time, had decided to invest it with a portion of his force and with the remainder launch the first phase of 'Operation Sledge' with the twin aim of destruction of the State Force troops that were trying to reinforce Skardu and cutting the Indian line of communication at Kargil and Dras to isolate Leh which was his objective for the next phase. Consequently on 10 May while a simultaneous attack was launched on Parkuta, Kargil and Dras, Colonel Kripal Singh's column was ambushed at Mirpigund with devastating effect. The column was caught in the open and at a place which provided not much cover. Never-the-less, after the initial shock the troops recovered and making use of whatever little cover that was available the fire was returned with some effect. Colonel Kripal Singh then sent a message to the Parkuta Companies asking them to attack the enemy from the rear. As the Parkuta garrison was without a wireless set the message was taken by volunteers, who slipped through the enemy lines unobtrusively. However, there was little that the Parkuta garrison could do being itself engaged in a fire fight with the enemy Another message was then sent to Parkutta, which took nearly five days to reach, asking the garrison to abandon its position and fight its way back to Mirpigund. This it did on 16th May when destroying all its heavy equipments it joined up with the Battalion headquarters In the fighting that was involved the garrison had suffered twenty casualties. The combined column under colonel Kripal Singh then fell back on Tolti.[46]

Meanwhile Kargil had fallen. With the move up of the 5th

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46. Ibid PP 264-265

Battalion to Tolti in early May the garrison that remained at Kargil consisted of a weak platoon of the 7th Battalion under Captain Lachman Dass Silwal and about a dozen sick and wounded cases who were undergoing treatment in the civil dispensary there. The enemy had attacked the garrison in great strength on 9/10 May night, supported by medium machine guns and 3 inch mortars. The initial attack had been held and also the subsequent attacks during the day on the 10th but by the end of the day, with the casualties mounting and ammunition exausted, it had become impossible for the garrison to hold out any more. Consequently Captain Silwal decided to abandon the post and withdraw during the night 10/11 May. Taking the Hindu civil officials along, the garrison at first tried to withdraw towards Leh but finding its way blocked by the enemy it took to the hills and moving over unexplored routes it was finally able to make its way to Kokarnag in Kashmir after a track of many days.[47]

DEFENCE OF LEH

The Occupation of Kargil by the enemy paved his way for the invasion of Ladakh. As narrated earlier Major Sher Jung Thappa had left behind at Leh just one platoon of his battalion before moving off to Skardu. From this strength, garrison had to be found for Leh, Khalsi, and Nubra valley, which allowed just a section at each place. This arrangement was certainly not satisfactory especially after the Pakistani started making attempts at infiltration into the Nubra Valley in the begining of January 1948. These Pakistani moves had caused considerable amount of alarm among the people of Ladakh. They sent urgent messages to Srinagar and Delhi for reinforcements and themselves voluntered to be armed and trained for the defence of their homeland. In response to these requests, Major Prithi Chand, Captain Khushal Chand, Subedar Major Bhim Chand and 18 other rank of the 2nd

47. Draft History J&K Rifles

Battalion of the Dogra Regiment, who hailed from Lahul and Spitti areas, were despatched to Leh to organise the local populace so that it may take up arms in defence of their hearth and home. Major Prithi Chand and his men crossed the Zojila Pass in early March 1948 and reached Leh on 12 March. Following closely at their heels were two platoons of the State Force under Captain Badri Singh who had been sent to reinforce the existing garrison in Ladakh. By 15 April 1948 300 Ladakhi Home Guards had been armed and were trained to form the 7th Battalion of the Jammu and Kashmir Militia with Lieut Colonel ~~designated as the 7th Battalion of the Jammu and Kashmir~~ Colonel Prithi Chand as its first Commanding Officer. The three platoons of the State Force were also placed under the command of Lieut Colonel Prithi Chand as he set about to organise the defence of Ladakh against the impending invasion. His first requirement was to arm and equip his newly formed Militia who, though being utilised to augment the strength of the State Force, were still ill armed and ill equipped for fighting a regular war. Infact most of them were as yet armed with bows and arrows, spears swords and other primitive weapons for want of any other. As transit of arms, ammunition and equipments, by road was at that time not advisable because of the time factor involved and the stores having to pass through Kargil which was at that time precariously held by the State Force and in danger of falling to the enemy any movement, air supply was the only answer. Even reinforcements could not have reached Leh in time unless they were flown in. Fortunately Mr Sonam Norbu a very energetic Ladakhi Engineer who had accompanied major Prithi Chand's party from Srinagar had set about laying out a landing strip immediately on arrival at Leh. He was able to have the air strip ready by 26 May when a Dakota flown by air Commodore Mehar Singh and carrying Major General K S Thimayya, GOC Sri Division, landed there. With Kargil having fallen a few days earlier, and Ladakh cut off from

Srinagar by land the air strip had been got ready not a day to soon.[48]

Unsuccessful Attempt to Recapture Kargil

Although Skardu had continued to hold out the capture of Kargil by Pakistanis enabled them to launch the 2nd phase of operation sledge and make a bee line for Leh where the Indian defence was, as we have seen, still far from complete. To check the enemy from getting a free run to Leh Sri Division decided to recapture Kargil by a counter attack. The question was of finding troops for this operation. Strangely enough Sri Division (Indian Army Division at Srinagar) ordered the Skardu garrison to abandon Skardu and assist in the capture of Kargil. Evidently those in command at Srinagar were still not very clear about the situation prevailing in this region and they had to be put wise by colonel Thappa who flashed out the following signal in response to the order issued to him :-

"Though message not clear due to some mistakes, probably in transmission I gather intention is to withdraw and conc at Olthing Thang with a view to recapture Kargil. May I bring to your kind notice. One, two days after we have were attacked in Skardu we said we could not hold Skardu and that it was easy to with-draw as enemy had not occupied line of withdrawal and plenty transport available. J&K force ordered to hold to last man last round. Two. We are holding for more than three months are left with no mortar ammunition and other ammunition practically exausted. With that we have to fight back about 80 miles route, all held by enemy in well prepared positions and having all supporting weapons

48. Draft History of Ladakh Scouts written by the author.

with plenty ammunition. Three, we have eight wounded stretcher cases. In addition some indoor patients and male and female and young all unfit to move. No collies to evacuate above. Four, two routes open for us to follow one through Col-Parkutta and second via Satpura. Both very strongly held by enemy in great depth. Simply impossible to pass through. If moved then fifty percent casualties of troops and not less than 80 percent refugees certain. Five, not a single coolie for ration etc Six, there are no troops at Kargil Olthing, Thang, Wagicha. Major Coutes etc having reached Leh. Troops at Tolti, Parkutta, are one strong battalion and have not been able to clear opposition and reach here. We are hardly two companies with no mortar ammunition and cannot fight back such a long distance all vital points held by enemy. Seven, troops from Srinagar could come much quicker than collection of scattered garrisions here and recapture Kargil. If SF troops not available Ld troops be pushed. Suggest and request. Alpha ammunition be dropped immediately. Bravo, more troops be pushed from Srinagar to recapture Kargil. Charlie, troops in Tolti area may not be withdrawn. Dog if our withdrawal is imperative suggest troops at Tolti, Parkutta be pushed here and we all fall back collectively. Lastly to avoid disaster of this garrison and refugees request you please reconsider your order.[49]"

The order was, indeed, reconsidered and cancelled. It was instead decided to stock up the Skardu garrison and use Colonel Col Kripal Singh's troops for the recapture of Kargil and orders were issued accordingly. Here again it was not appreciated that without porters the Battalion would have to shed its heavy equipment, supporting

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49. DK Palit pp 239-240.

weapons and much of its ammunition, and befret of these it would hardly be in a position to recapture Kargil from a well armed and well equipped enemy. Never-the-less the orders were obeyed and after destroying its heavy equipment the 5th and the 7th Battalion combine started its trak back to Kargil on night 18/19 May. To avoid being ambushed the column did not follow the mule track and instead marched across country over the mountains. The going was extremely difficult and though the enemy did not interfere with the withdrawal, he with the active assistance of the locals, kept a continuous trail of the move of the column. During the night the enemy lamp signals could be seen and it was quite apparent that the enemy was all the time aware of the wherabouts of the column.[50]

By 2 p.m. on the 19th the column had closed in at Kharmang. The village was deserted and there were no signs of the enemy being present anywhere around and there being a few hours of day light still left, Colonel Kripal Singh decided to push on to Bagicha. No sooner had the column prepared to move than the whole area became live with the enemy fire from all the sides. The men immediately went to the ground and took up positions but the surprise achieved by the enemy from his well concealed and camouflaged positions had already caused considerable number of casualties among them- sixty being killed and an equal number wounded. The fire fight lasted all afternoon and with enemy reinforcements having arrived, by evening he was able to completely encircle the column. Colonel Kirpal Singh then sought to take advantage of the darkness of the night for sneaking out of the cordon by batches. Like this the column was able to concentrate at Bagicha by 3 a.m. on 20th May. Unfortunately, however, three platoons had lost their way in the night and they never turned up at the rendezvous at Bagicha.

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50. Draft History J&K Rifles PP 265-266

Although the column had been successful in reaching Nagicha it was hardly in a position to undertake any sort of an offensive. As it is, it was shorn off its supporting weapons. Now it had been badly moulded and lost two hundered of its strength by way of casualties in killed, wounded and missing, Being in enemy held territory it did not even have the facility of a firm base from where to launch its offensive on Kargil nor was there a provision for providing it with logistic support. Colonel Kirpal Singh, therefore, decided to proceed to Drass (which was known to be still holding out) and use it as a base for proceeding against Kargil.[51]

By-passing Kargil, the column now advanced towards Tohunwas on its way to Drass. The column was without rations and for the first few days lived on 'Sattus' which the men managed to collect from the deserted villages enroute. Tohunwas was crossed on the 23rd of May. The going had been very difficult particularly on the 22nd when the column had to move through a blinding snow storm which put it off its bearing for sometime. At Tohunwas itself the column was caught under a very heavy snow fall and had to endure cold, piercing, winds. All the suffering was forgotten for a moment when as a pleasant surprise 12 stragglers from the three platoons that had veered off during the night withdrawal from Karmang to Nagicha appeared from nowhere and joined the column. These men narrated the story of how the three platoons had lost their way and had all these days been followed and harassed by the enemy still most of them had been killed or wounded. These 12 had finally managed to break contact with the enemy and here they were happily reunited. By 23rd evening Kiniyal was reached where the villagers, unaffected by the communal virus, were most cooperative and willingly sold their 'Sattus' to the troops. Thereafter the column advanced towards Matiyal which was reached on the 25th. Here too the people were very friendly and

51. Ibid PP 267-268 and interview Col Kripal Singh with author at Samba 1985

sold to the troops whatever little food that was available with them.

On 27th May at about 8 a.m. the column reached Franshot where it intended to cross the Shingu river over the foot bridge, which was known to be there, and make straight for Dras which was still holding out against repeated attacks by the enemy. But the enemy had been on the trail all along and, anticipating the move, had already dismantled the bridge. In order to prevent the Dogras from reconstructing it the bridge site was covered with fire from positions on adjoining dominating features. The column's problems, however, was absence of bridging material more than enemy interference. No doubt some popular problems had been cut and pulled down to the bridge site during 27th/28th night but with no ropes available to hold them together, they could not be made use of. So even though enemy interference had been checked through some spirited attacks on his positions and by restricting the working hours to the night, the effort to reconstruct the bridge had to be abandoned due to non availability of ropes. The column now decided to cross the river upstream at Gultari where also there was a foot bridge. Unfortunatel-ly it had to leave to their fate a section of its men who had been ferried across at Franshot to help in the construction of the bridge from the far bank.[52]

When Gultari was reached the cradle bridge over the Shingu river was found to be intact. This was, however, an ancient structure which consisted of long logs wound up with old worn out ropes. Never-the-less the chance was taken and the crossing was commenced immediately. The column had never been in for luck so far and nor was it on this day. Just when two companies of the 7th Battalion and about fifteen men of the 5th had crossed over the bridge gave

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52. Ibid

way and the whole structure fell into the river taking with it the three men who were in the process of crossing. The men who fell into the cold torrential waters did not have the slightest chance of saving themselves and they were swept away to their death. The column on the other hand was now split into two halves and each half had to adopt a different route for reaching Dras; the companies of the 7th Battalion via the Marpo La (16000 ft) and those of the 5th Battalion their Colonel Kripal Singh via the Karobal Gali (18,647 feet above sea level). The two portions of the column moved parellel to each other for some time, with Colonel Kripal Singh exercising control over both, but when they got out of communication with each other they moved as two indenpendent columns.

The companies of the 7th Battalion moved along the right bank of Shingu for some time after crossing the river at Gultari and then moved across country over a series of ridges and nallas on its way to Dras. Movement over mountainous terrain, devoid of all tracks, and with nothing to eat for a couple of days proved most exausting for the men. The situation was made worse by the enemy who closely followed the column and continuously snipped at the column from dominating features all along the route. The greatest disappointment, however, awaited the column at Dras itself. What should have been a warm reception by the Dras garrison at the end of the column's travails, turned out to be a hot one by the enemy.[53]

Unfortunately the column had reached Dras on about 5th June just a couple of days too late. The Dras garrison had held on to its positions tenaciously against repeated enemy attacks for about 23 days. During this period the garrison had remained

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53. Ibid

completely surrounded by the enemy and with the telephone line to Kargil and Machoi having been cut it had been out of communication ever since the start of the enemy offensive on 10th May. After the three weeks of stubborn resistance the situation for the Dras garrision became desperate as its rations and ammunition stocks got exausted. The Garrison Commander Captain Kashmir Singh then decided to break through the enemy cordon and withdraw to Machoi. Evidently the enemy had anticipated the move and hardly had the column reached Pindras, six miles from Dras, when it was way laid. Consequently the garrison was forced to take up a defensive position at Pindras to avoid a running fight. The garrison was never able to break contact with the enemy thereafter, and with the last box of ammunition fired and half the strength, including its gallant commander Captain Kashmir Singh and all the junior commissioned Officers killed in the fighting, the garrison made one last attempt at breaking out in small groups. Most of these men were rounded up by the enemy before they could get too far out in the hills and taken prisoner. The two companies of the 7th Battalion had arrived at Dras oblivious of the fact that it was in enemy hands. They were taken aback when the enemy opened up heavy fire from all the features around. The companies took up positions and returned the fire. The fire fight lasted the whole day and the whole night but during this twenty four hours of fighting the column in an effort to keep the enemy from closing in exhausted all its ammunition. As the fire from the Column's side ceased, the enemy descended on it from the heights and most of the men were taken prisoners. A few however, took advantage of the confusion and managed to escape. They marched over unknown mountains and passes and trickled into Srinagar in ones and twos to be able to tell the sad story.[54]

The going for the other column under colonel Kripal Singh over the Karobal Gali also proved to be tough and hazardous with the

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54. Ibid

men having to trudge through deep snow for many miles and being painfully lashed by strong icy winds hours on end. On such occasions visibility was poor and with large portions of the tracks hidden under snow the column lost its way a number of times before it reached the pass. By the time the Pass was crossed on about 2nd June thirty five men were found to have got lost in the blinding snow storm. Badoab was reached on 3rd June. The inhabitants, though Muslims were very cooperative and provided the column with whatever rations they could spare. They even volunteered to give information about the enemy who had planned an ambush at Laman Nalla track junction. With the help of guides from the village, the enemy position was located and in a surprise attack 35 of the enemy were killed. The great ordeal was over when the column finally reached Sonamarg on the evening of 7th June; the men totally exausted having not eaten any thing other than tree leaves and shoots of young plants for the past two days.[55]

With the disintegration of Colonel Kripal Singh's column chances of capturing Kargil or reinforcing Skardu in the near future had become remote. It was by now very clear that no adhoc type of operations for this purpose could succeed and that a major well planned operation was called for. This was, however, bound to take time so the prime question now was how to make Skardu hold on till then. If valour alone was required, there was nothing to worry, but along with courage and determination the garrison also required ammunition to fight with and rations and medicines tok keep alive and fight on. When orders for the withdrawal of the garrison were cancelled on suggestion from the garrison commander, headquarters Sri Division had decided to maintain the garrison by air supply. Air

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55. Ibid

drops, however, did not prove to be much of a success, since the fighter air craft which alone could be used for the purpose at such heights, could carry only a limited quantity of supplies per sortie. Besides, the dropping zone (within the defences) was extremely narrow with the result that high speed aircraft found it difficult to off load all the supplies within the zone accurately and each time the drop was made nearly fifty percent of the stores would fall outside the zone into enemy hands. Only straffing by these aircraft on enemy positions proved effective and this enabled the garrison to conserve its own ammunition and make its meagre stocks last longer.[56]

LEH SAVED

Even though Skardu was holding out, the capture of Kargil by the Pakistanis on 10 May had opened the way for a full fledged advance on Leh along the Srinagar-Leh Highway. By 20 May they had reached Khalsi and dislodged the State Force platoon and the Ladakhi Militia guarding the bridge. Fortunately, however, own troops were able to destroy the bridge before the enemy could cross over. There after Major Khushal Chand who was the overall commander of the troops at Khalsi took up positions dominating the bridge site and sought to delay the enemy by interfering with his bridge repairing operation Meanwhile Lt Col Prithi Chand had mustered all available troops at Leh and rushed to the whelp of Major Khushal Chand. The two together were able to delay the enemy by occuping successive delaying positions till 1st June when a weak company of the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Gorkha Rifles under Lieut P N Kaul flew into Leh and was rushed immediately to the front to reinforce the State Force platoon and the Ladakhi Militia who had heroically resisted the enemy all these days. The enemy, however, was too strong even for this combined

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56. Ibid

strength and in the next one month Lieut Kaul had gradually got pushed back to as far as Himis Sukpachan before being joined by a company of the 2/8 Gorkha Rifles under Major Hari Chand on Ist July' 1948. With the arrival of Major Hari Chand's company one might have expected the situation to stablise but this was not to be as the enemy too had been greatly reinforced by now and both the Gorkha companies continued to be pushed back from one defensive position to the other during the next month and a half's fighting. By 12 August they had been pushed back to Taru which was just about 12 miles from Leh. The situation was finally saved with the arrival of the rest of the 2/8 Gorkha Battalion under Lt Col H S Prab at Leh on 12 August 1948, making the Taru defences too strong for the enemy to break through.[57]

THE FALL OF SKARDU

Leh had indeed been saved but situation at Skardu had become very critical. The situation had infact been always critical but it had become more so after the failure of Colonel Kripal Singh's column and the unsuccessful attempts to maintain the garrison by air supply. By the middle of June, with no chance of any help reaching it from anywhere, there never remained any doubt that the garrison was doomed. But the State Force troops were out to set a new mark in endurance, preseverence and courage. It was thus that the garrison refused to consider surrender even when the enemy in a message to colonel Thapa assured him of benevolent conduct and good treatment. This offer was made on 17 June when Amar Nath who had been taken prisoner at Parkutta was sent to the garrison with a message for Colonel Thapa from Colonel Shahzada Mata-ul-Mulk, Commander Azad Central Forces Skardu. The message makes very

57. Draft History Ladakh Scouts by the author.

interesting reading and is therefore reproduced below:-

"All attempts to relieve your garrison by Brigadier Faqir Singh, Lt Colonel Kripal Singh, and Sampuran Bachan Singh have resulted in absolute failure resulting in numerous killed and prisoners taken.

"You have done your duty as every soldier should do. Now that it is clear that no relief can reach you in this mountainous area there is no doubt about the ultimate fate of your garrison and I am quite determined about it. It is no use to carry on a struggle which will result in your annihilation.

"I therefore advise you to lay down arms and I take full responsibility to give protection to one and all. You must believe me and trust me as I am not only a soldier but also possess royal blood. I have given instructions to my officers and men that any one approaching with a white flag will not be fired at but taken into safe custody.

"Lastly as a proof of my goodwill I wish to inform you that not a single non Muslim property has been looted or damaged and uptil now they carry on their business as if nothing at all had happened. I, therefore, advise you again to lay down arms and thus save your lives. An officer should accompany back the white flag if you consider my words sincere and honest." [58]

There after while enemy pressure on the garrison had increased with the passage of each day its ability to resist it had diminished in somewhat inverse proportion. The situation had taken a turn for the worse during the first week of August when the enemy brought forward a 3.7 inch Howitzer to decide the issue once for all. At that time besides the acute shortage of ammunition that the

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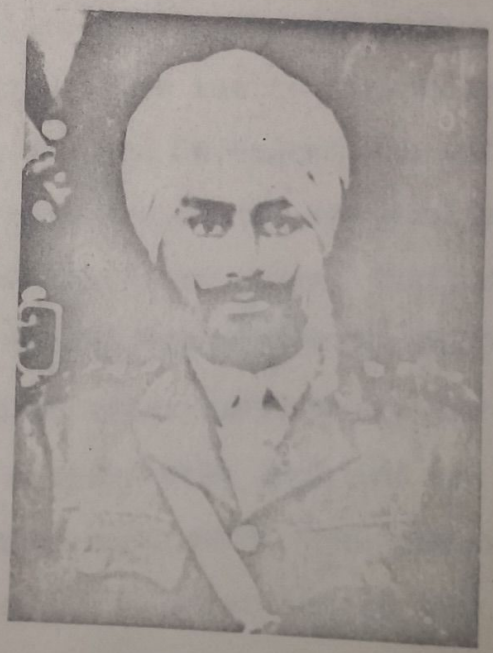
58. DK Palit pp 240-241

Brigadier Sher Jang Thapa MVC

Major Apit Singh VrC



Capt Gurya Singh

garrison was faced with, the vitality of the men had reached the lowest ebb due to prolonged under nourishment bordering on starvation. Never-the-less with a super human effort the garrison beat back the enemy attack on 12 August even though it was the heaviest attack that the enemy had made so far. On that day the enemy had concentrated all his strength against just one post for creating a gap in the defences. He had even succeeded in gaining a foot-hold on the post but had eventually been thrown black in disgrace by the handful of our men defending this post, in the hand to hand fighting that followed. At one stage in the battle the post had nearly been lost for want of ammunition but the situation had been saved by sending up, literally, the last box of reserve ammunition from the Battalion Headquarters.

With not more than ten rounds of small arms ammunition remaining with each man the successfully defence on 12 August also marked the end of the ability of the garrison to resisit any further and with the men on the verge of complete starvation and eith nothing to fight with, it was left with no alternative but to surrender.

The garrison raised the white flag on 14 August, whereafter the enemy indulged in an orgy of mad massacre of the non Muslims and rape of their women folk. Some how the Sikhs became their main target and throwing all norms of the Geneva Convention to the winds all sikh soldiers were brutally murdered after their surrender. Among these was Captain Gangé Singh, a very noble soul and an excellent officer, who was tied and then shot dead. Some men of the garrision refursed to surrender and tried to break though the enemy ring in a bid escape being taken prisoner. Most of them got rounded up his by the enemy and were brutally murdered.* Only four men managed to escape to Srinagar. The enemy was thus able to proudly pass the following message to his headquarters which was intercepted by the Indian wireless:-

* Interview with Lt Major Ajit Singh by the author at Jammu 1985
* Name of post could not be ascertained. Probably there is a mix-up with the action at School Picket on 24/30 Aug

"All sikhs shot all women raped."[59]

The awards that were distributed to the enemy soldiers for these acts of gallantry are not known. It is also not known where Colonel Shabzada-Mata-ul-Mulk, the soldier with Royal blood, was when this dastardly crime was being committed.

The remaining prisoners of war which included Lt Colonel Sherjung Thapa, Captain Prabhat Singh, Captain Ajit Singh, and Captain Bhagat Singh were removed to Attock fort where they remained in captivity till repatriated to India in May 1950. The Government of India in the meantime awarded the Maha Vir Chakara to Colonel Sher Jang for gallantry and supreme leadership displayed by him all through the six months seige.

In early November 1948, 77 Para Brigade of the Indian Army supported by the Newly raised Ist J&K Mountain Battery crossed over the Zojila Pass and advanced on Kargil. This unnarved the enemy on the Tara front, at the outskirts of Leh, and with his rear threatened he started withdrawing in unseemly haste. The 2/8 Gorkhas Rifles then took up the pursuit and chased the enemy down to Kargil, where he was attacked by 77 Para Brigade moving up from Dras. Kargil was captured by the Para Brigade on 25 November and thereafter the link up between the Brigade and the troops from Leh was duly effected. This also marked the opening up of the Srinagar-Leh Nighway. The enemy continued to lurk around in the Nubra Valley for some time more more, but by the time cease Fire took effect on 31st December the valley had been completely rid of the enemy right upto Baigdangdan, with a post of the Ladakhi Militia firmly estabalished on the Tebe Nala.[60]

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59. Draft History J&K Rifles pp 274-275
60. Draft History Ladakh Scouts.

3 inch mortars. When were they first used.

THE RELIEF OF POONCH

With the establishment of the air link and the conduct of the grain operations the situation in Poonch had been greatly eased. There, however, still remained the ultimate requirement of linking Poonch with Jammu by land. While efforts towards this end were being made, the task of the Poonch garrison was to enlarge its perimeter of defence around Poonch town with the dual purpose of recapturing as much of the territory as possible and keeping the enemy so far away as not to allow him to disrupt the newly established air link. The enemy had in fact brought up his 3 inch mortars much before but it was taken a serious note of only after an aircraft was hit by a shell and the landings had to be suspended till after the enemy was pushed back and strip made safe from his 3 inch mortars. After the 3 inch mortars were put out of range the enemy brought 4.2 inch mortars and then the mountain guns, necessity arising each time for the garrison to push the enemy further and further back. Quite obviously the required offensive action could not have been undertaken without reinforcements. The 3rd Battalion of 9th Gorkhas Rifles was, therefore, flown into Poonch for augmenting the strength of the garrison; the first batch arriving at the end of December and the entire move being completed by the middle of January 1948. Subsequently when there was a requirement for more troops the 11th Battalion of J&K Militia was raised, from among the Hindu and Sikh refugees in Poonch, under the command of Lieut Colonel K D Pachnanda. Later as the enemy also began to get reinforced one mountain battery and one field battery were also added to the strength of the garrison to match with that of the enemy. On the minus side the two companies of the 7th Battalions were flown out of Poonch to join up with the two Dogra companies of the Battalion at Srinagar. However by the time the two companies reached Srinagar the Dogra Companies had left for Skardu. Consequently two other companies (Dogras) were rushed to complete

the strength of the Battalion and the Battalion was sent to augment against the Tithwal sector.

The bulk of the troops of the Poonch Brigade (later redesignated as 101 Brigade and still later as 168 Brigade) continued to be those of the State Force. As such the State Force continued to have the honour of being employed in practically every operation that took place in Poonch after the take over by the Indian Army till the Cease Fire on 31st December 1948. It may be recorded with the greatest satisfaction that in all these operations the State units fought with ~~the greatest satisfaction that in all these operations the State units fought with~~ distinction, winning high praise for the undaunted courage, unlimited endurance, and exemplary devotion to duty, exhibited by their men. Some of the important engagements in which these troops took part are recounted in succeeding paragraphs.

On 15 January 1948 the effect of the enemy 3 inch mortars was first felt when a Dakota was damaged while making a landing on the airstrip. The very next day one company of the 9th Battalion under Captain Jagdish Singh and ~~xxx~~ one of the 8th under Captain Kripal ~~x~~ Singh were sent out to establish a piquet on the lower slopes of the 5508 feature. Also on the same day two companies of the 1st Battalion were allotted the task of capturing point 5425 (a feature over looking the Poonch town), which was known to be strongly held by the enemy. Consequently Captain Seva Nath OC "C" Company led a column comprising his own 'C' Company and 'B' Company (commanded by Subedar Khazood Singh). The column left camp at 11 p.m., moved along the nalla to Dakui village and onwards to the objective along a wooded spur. The enemy about 90 strong was taken completely by surprise as the Dogras charged with bayonets at dawn. Most of the enemy was killed in the hand to hand fighting that followed while eleven were taken prisoners. A few that tried to run away were engaged with mortars and medium machine guns and not many of them could have managed to escape the deadly fire.

After establishing a permanent piquet here the rest of the column returned to Poonch. The column suffered one JCO and three other rank killed and four other rank wounded. During the fighting Jemadar Sardha Ram, Naik Budhi Singh and Sepoy Neel Kanthm of the Ist Battalion showed great courage and selfless devotion to duty and for their acts of gallantry each were awarded the Vir Chakar; the former posthumously.[61]

In mid February the newly arrived 3/9 Gorkha Rifles was given the task of extending the ring of piquets across the Batar Nalla. This entailed dislodging the enemy from the long ridge running from north to south and ending on the Poonch River; some two miles west of the junction of the Poonch and Batar rivers. In the operation that followed, two companies of the Ist J&K Infantry under Lieut Colonel Hira Nand Dubey demonstrated against the southern end of the ridge while 3/9 Gorkha Rifles, under Lieut Colonel D K Palit, attacked the ridge-highest point downwards. Colonel Dubey's troops co-operated excellently and in an attack captured the southern tip of the ridge even as the Gorkhas worked their way from the north and dislodged the enemy from one piquet after another down the ridge. The spitfires of the Indian Air Force were used in the ground support role for the first time in Poonch during this operation, and by the morning of 19 February the whole ridge (renamed Gorkha Ridge) was in our hands. The troops were withdrawn after establishing two permanent piquets on the ridge.[62]

Although about 5000 refugees had been evacuated in returning aircraft by the end of February there were still too many mouths to feed in Poonch and the 'grain' operations did not seem to be bringing in enough for this purpose.

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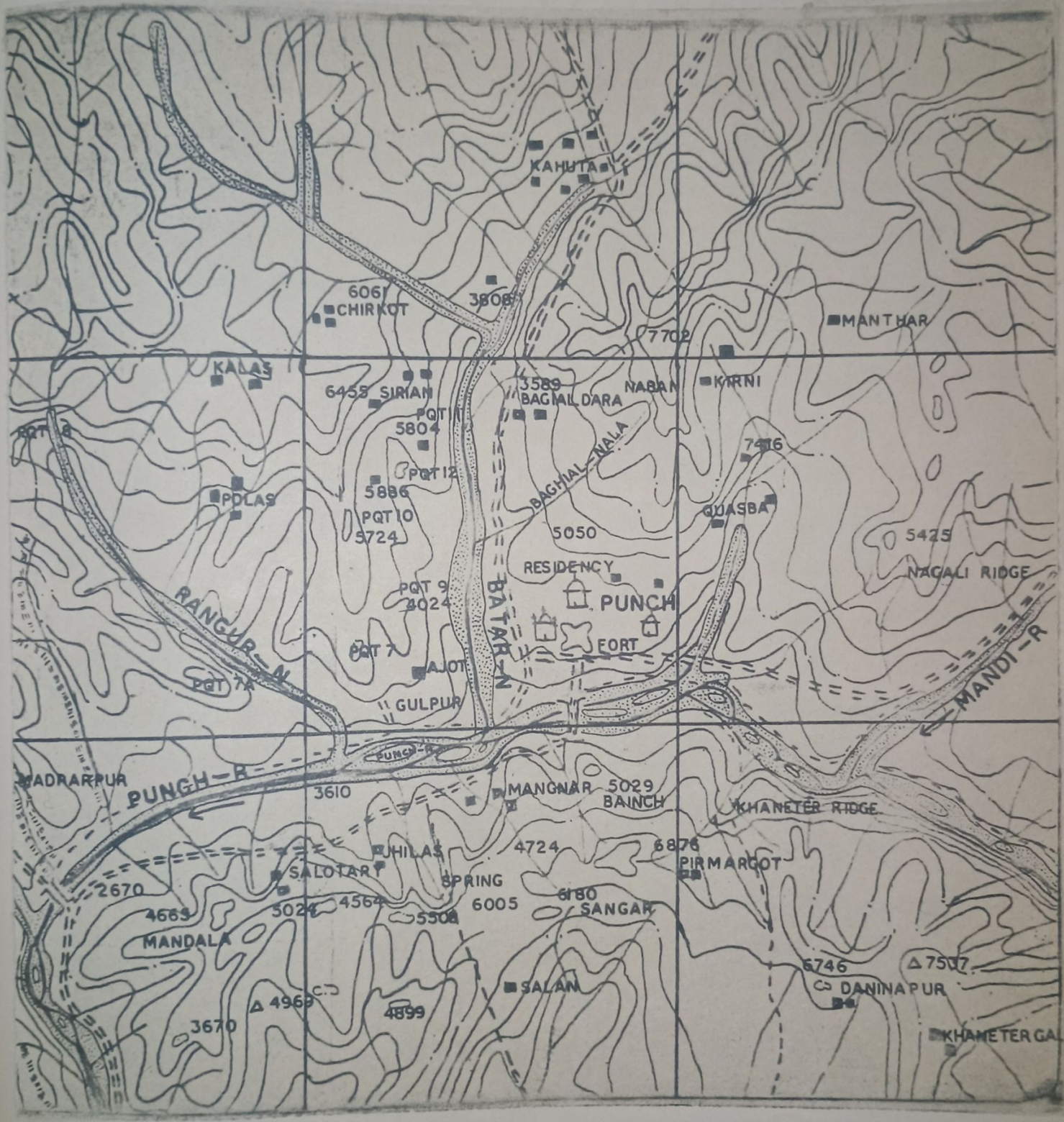
61. Interview Lt Col Seva Nath Jammu 1985

62. D K Palit pp 212-213.

DEFENCE OF POONCH



Brigadier Pritam Singh therefore decided upon an ambitious "harvesting operation". Some four miles south-east of Poonch and across the river a long flat ridge running south-wards from the river and climbing up to the heights of Khanetar Gali could be seen covered with large fields of ripening crop, ready for harvesting. The Brigade Commander decided upon a plan to have the crop on the Khanetar Ridge harvested by the refugees with the support of troops, before the enemy was able to do so. Consequently on 1st/2nd March night two companies of the 8th Battalion under ~~Major Ingrez Singh~~ Lt Col Maluk Singh, supported by one company of 1st Kumaon, crossed over the Poonch River by the bridge, and crept along the lower slopes towards the Banich Nalla. From here the column moved up the two spurs leading up to the objective but the route was over such rugged and steep ground that the mules carrying 3 inch mortars had to be left behind. The going being difficult Colonel Maluk Singh ~~(who was accompanying the column)~~ (who was accompanying the column) himself acted as a guide, moving with the leading company. However, unknown to the column, both the spurs were already occupied by the enemy in strength and by 4 a.m. the advance was held up as the column got engaged in heavy fighting on both the spurs. Two additional platoons of the 8th Battalion were then rushed up from Poonch and with their help the column was able to clear the enemy from the spurs, a little after first light. Khanetar village was captured by 8 p.m. that day and after that the refugees were escorted to the Khanetar ridge for harvesting the crop. This was successfully completed inspite of occasional enemy sniper fire and after collecting about 6 tons of grains the column returned to Poonch on 5th March.[63]

On 17 March evening the enemy launched an unusually heavy attack on piquet No. 9 which was held by a company of the 1st Battalion under Captain Diwan Singh. In the pre 'H' hour bombardment

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63. Ibid pp 213-214.

the enemy used 3.7 inch Howitzers (i.e 4 Lahore Battery) and 3 inch mortars, firing a total of about 200 shells/bombs, which was the heaviest shelling by the enemy on any one piquet in the Poonch operations till then. The piquet, however, stood firm under the inspiring leadership of Captain Diwan Singh who personally controlled the fire of the forward platoons and the attack was successfully repulsed. Captain Diwan Singh earned a Mention in Despatches for this action.[64]

An operation to widen the circle of piquets around Poonch was carried out by the Poonch Brigade in mid April. The area of point 5724 was known to be an enemy strong-hold from where he had been conducting raids on Poonch town, while once or twice his snipers had succeeded in firing on the Brigade Headquarters located in the Moti Mahal Palace. A composite battalion consisting of companies from 1st, 8th and 9th Battalions was formed for this task under Lieut Colonel Hira Nand. The feature to be captured was held by about 150 of the enemy, and was very well defended with anti personnel mines and booby traps. The first attack did not succeed nor did the second and it was only in the third attack that the position was finally captured. With one JCO and 14 other rank killed and two officers(Lieut Colonel Hira Nand and Captain Balwan Singh) and 19 other rank wounded the casualties suffered by own troops had been rather heavy but the result had been very rewarding as it put a permanent end to the threat of enemy infiltrators getting so close to the town. ~~For his exemplary leadership and personal courage displayed during this action Lieut Colonel Hira Nand was awarded the Vir Chakra.~~ Subedar Kanshi Ram who was commanding the company of the 9th Battalion and L/NK Santan of his company ~~also~~ earned a Vir Chakra each for conspicuous gallantry during this operation.[65]

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64. Ibid p 214
65. Ibid pp 214-215. General Palit has shown Jemadar Sarda Ram as killed and awarded Vir Chakra posthumously during this (PTO)

On 17th/18th May night the 3/9 Gorkha Rifles under Lt Col D K Palit made a successful attack on point 4036. After being thrown back from his positions the enemy took up positionson the lower slopes to th south and started interfering with the casualty evacuation activity of the Gorkhas. The 8th Battalion was, therefore, ordered to attack the spurx and dislodge the enemy from there. Consequently Colonel Maluk Singh set out with two companies at about 6 p.m. on the 18th and led to the start line by guides from the Gorkha Battalion he went into the assualt by 2 a.m. on the 19th. Complete surprise was achieved and the enemy fled in front of the bayonet charge by the Dogras. The wounded Gorkhas were then escorted back to Poonch for evacuation by air. Point 4036 then became the garr garrison's No. 8 piquet and was manned by a company of the 1st Battalion.[66]

As the process of extending the ring of piquets around Poonch was in progress, the enemy made desperate attempts to break this ring. In one such bid he attacked piquet No. 12, held by a company of the 8th Battalion under Captain Kirpal Singh, on 15/16 July night. Although the attack was beaten back as vigorously as it was made the enemy succeeded in occupying a small feature about 50 yards from the perimeter from where he started sniping into the piquet. To deal with the situation Captain Kripal Singh sent a small party under Subedar Krishan Singh to eviet the enemy from this feature. The feature was cleared of the enemy but during the bayonet charge made by the party Subedar Krishan Singh and Sepoy Bua Ditta were killed fighting. Both of them received posthumous awards of the Vir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry displayed by them.[67]

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65. operation. This appears incorrect as the date of award of Vir Chakra to Sarda Ram is 17 January 1948, both as per Battalic record as well as that shown in *The Encyclopaedia of Soldiers with Higest Awards*

66. Ibid pp 215-216

67. Ibid pp 217-218

Towards the third week of August a Hindu refugee from emeny held territory, who had escaped to Poonch, and brohght information of an impending enemy attack on Piquet No. 8 with the object of breaking through to the Poonch town.

He also informed of the large enemy concentration in the area to the north-west of No. 8 piquet and the "long barralled guns" which had been brought forward on camels. Consequently an alert was sounded and No 8 piquet was ordered to strengthen over head protection over its bunkers to withstand 25 pounder fire. The company piquet commanded by Captain Hazmir ~~Hoshir~~ Singh of 1st Battalion to was also reinforced with an additional platoon. The refugee's information proved to be correct and on 27 August at 3.30 a.m. the enemy opened up with his 25 pounders and 3 inch mortars to "soften up" the defences before assault. After a short but intense bombardment the Piquet was attacked by the enemy, some 600 strong. The attack was supported by one antitank gun being used in a bunker busting role. But nothing daunted the Dogras who, maintaining their tradition of tenacity in defence put up the most spirited resistance and by day break the attack had been affectively stalled. Unable to advance any further the enemy withdrew but only to attack again at about 1 p.m. This time he managed to approach within 30 yards of the piquet but as he tried to rush forward he got entangled in the ~~maxim~~ mine field which was effectively covered with fire from the piquet. Grendes were freely exchanged between the two sides before the enemy decided to call it a day and withdraw for good. The enemy had suffered a large number of killed and wounded which he carried away as he withdrew. The piquet suffered one killed and 13 wounded in this gallant action. L/NK Dharub Singh and Sapoy Sant

Ram earned a Vir Chakara each for outstanding courage, selflessness and devotion to duty displayed by them during this action. Captain Harmir Singh was Mentioned in Despatches for his outstanding leadership.[68]

During the third week of October when the enemy brought up his 4.2 mortars in the area of point 7416, a dominating height to the north-east of Poonch, and started putting down harassing fire on the town and the airstrip, the Brigade Commander decided to push the enemy back from the area and establish own piquet instead. For this task an operation by three columns was launched. Column one, consisting of the 1st J&K Infantry plus a coy of 11 J&K Militia under Lieut Colonel Khajoor Singh, (who had by now taken over command of 1st Battalion), was to capture point 7702, one and a half miles to the north of point 7416. The second column consisting of 8th J&K Infantry (less company), plus one company J&K Militia, under Lieut Colonel Maluk Singh was to attack point 7416 while the third column consisting of the 11th J&K Militia (less two companies) plus

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68. Draft History J&K Rifles p 193.

The Pakistani version of the story as narrated by Major General Shaukat Riza (retd) in his book Izzat-o-Iqbal makes interesting reading and shows how serious the Pakistanis were about capturing this piquet. Extract reproduced below :-

"In succeeding months the Indians strengthened their position on Chajja hills around Poonch. In August 1948 Brig Morley decided to deal with the nuisance with field and anti-tank guns... The artillery School Nowshera conducted trials with a 2 pounder and a six pounder. The guns were taken to pieces, assembled in previously prepared bunkers and ~~School~~ engaged targets illuminated with 2 inch mortar flares. The School recommended 2 pounder guns for the operation. Ghani (Major, oc 29 Anti Tank Battery) opted for 6 pounder. Morley decided in favour of Ghani... The desloyment of gund position was carried out at night as rehearsed- but under enemy harassing fire... the third night they were ready. At about 0,100 hours the flares went up and the 6 pounder started pumping armour piercing and high explosive rounds into two of the largest bunkers. The resulting dust and smoke prevented further engagement. The Indians retaliated with four field guns, four mountains guns and every mortar they could lay their hands on. Some direct hits were scored on the 6 pounders bunker. But the gun had two layers of logs for over-head protection in (PTO)

a company of 9th J&K Infantry, under Lieut Colonel Pachnanda was to occupy the Naban village, midway between points 7702 and 7416, to protect the left flank of columns one and two. Column one met with no no resistance as it occupied its objective. Nor was there much resistance offered by the enemy tor column three. Unfortunately, however, the company of the 9th Battalion of the column strayed into a minefield and suffered five casualties in killed and wounded before it could extricate itself to reach the objective. But column two to had to fight all the way up to point 7416. The resistance put up by the enemy was in fact so stiff that the column was forced to change its route twice before reaching its objective. Finally when it put in its attack on the objective it came under very heavy defensive fire from enemy medium machine guns and 3 inch mortars, but the column led by Colonel Maluk Singh advanced undaunted and was soon able to evict the enemy from his post. The enemy then made one counter attack but there was not much weight in it, and it was soon repulsed, and by 3 a.m. own piquet had been firmly established on point 7416. The body that fell to the column included the enemy 4.2 inch mortar which had, infact, caused the operation to be undertaken. Besides this the enemy had left behind large quantities of rations and ammuntion which greatly eased the problem of stocking the newly established piquet.[69]

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68. (Contd) anticipation of enemy reaction. The splinters wounded Ghani and Nav Baluch Khan..... The 6 pounder remained quiet throughout the night. At first light it opened up with better effect than the previous engagement. Immediately afterward the guns was dismantled and withdrawn to a safe position. Ghani was awarded a well deserved Sitara-i-Jurat for his action". Surely Harmir Singh of the 1st Battalion who thwarted the Pakistani attack deserved much more than what he was awarded.

69. D K Palit pp 218-219.

The Poonch - Rajauri Link Up

The first attempt to effect a link up between the force at Rajauri and that at Poonch was made in June 1948 when 1/2 Punjab had set out from Rajauri and Ist Kamaon from Poonch and met around Mendhar on the 17th. The operation had been successful in that the two battalions had combined to attack and capture Mendhar on the 20th of June but the operation was on too small a scale to be able to open up the land route from Rajauri to Poonch permanently. After capturing Mendhar the Kumaonies had returned to Poonch along with the 1/2 Punjab, thus raising the strength of the Poonch garrison by another battalion. But this was not all that the Poonch garrison was looking for. Poonch had been cut off from the rest of the country for too long now and there was an urgent need for opening up the land route from Jammu to Poonch. Besides the fact that the delay in the link up was giving time to the enemy to build up his strength in the Thana Mandi area to make the task more difficult by October 1947 it was clear that a cease fire was in the offing and if Poonch was to remain with India it had to be linked up with Jammu before a truce was forced on India by the United Nations. Consequently the task was taken up in all earnest in the middle of October.

As intelligence and air reconnaissance reports indicated that the enemy had already built up his strength to two battalions at Thana Mandi the link up operation was planned to be undertaken by two infantry brigades moving up from Rajauri in the south. 5 Infantry Brigade was, therefore, sent up from Jammu to join the Rajauri garrison by 20th October. Soon afterwards the first phase of "Operation Easy" (as the link up operation was code named) was launched in which the two features dominating Thana Mandi- Pir Badesar and Pir Kalewa were captured by 19 and 5 Brigades respectively. Shimber Gali was then secured by 5 Brigade on 9th November, whereafter the Brigade advanced to Mendhar and further north

to keep its appointment with the Poonch Brigade.[70]

Meanwhile in order to break the enemy cordon round Poonch and to facilitate the link up, the Poonch Brigade launched two consecutive operations in the last week of November, for the capture of the Krishna Ghati Ridge, that seperates Poonch from the Mandhar district. The Ridge was known to be strongly held between point 4665 and point 5508 (Krishna Ghati). On the eastern part of the Ridge there were known enemy piquets at points 6005 and 6180 while Dani-Na-Pir (point 6796) at the eastern extremity was believed to be free of the enemy. The first operation termed "Operation Krishna Ghati" was laumbhed on 19 November, with the aim of capturing the eastern edge of the Ridge from Krishna Ghati to Dani-Na-Pir; Marghat Ghazi to Dani-Na-Pir in the first phase and points 6180, 6005, 5508 in the second phase.[71]

The Ist Battalion under Lieut Colonel Khajoor Singh with the newly raised 9th J&K Militia (less two companies) under command, left the assembly area after dusk on 19 November for the first phase of "Operation Krishan Ghati". As the leading company under Captain Sewa Nath reached just below Pir Marghat Ghazi it humped into the enemy covering position. Captain Sewa Nath who was moving with the foward platoon, however, kept his cool and as the enemy opened up with all his weapons he with great presence of mind shouted "Apna admi hai, fire band karo" and during the small pause in the firing that followed he led a bayonat charge on the enemy position, just about 50 yards away. The attack was successful butt the company (mainly the forward platoon) had suffered about 21 wounded including the Company Commander. Colonel Khajoor Singh then sent forward his adjutant Captain Dewan Singh to take over the company from Captain

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70. Ibid pp 219-220
71. Ibid pp 220-221.

Sewa Nath and continue the advance. The enemy put up stiff resistence all the way upto to Pir Marghot Ghazi but there was nothing to deter the Dogras, now led by Captain Dewan Singh, from capturing their objective. The booty that fell to the company at Pir Marghot Ghazi included one battery charging set with two 12 volt batteries, 12000 rounds of small arms ammunition, 30 bombs of 3 3 inch mortar, a wireless set and a couple of rifles. In the fighting upto Pir Marghot Ghazi Captain Dewan Singh too had been wounded but not so seriously and he continued to lead the company right upto Dani-Na-Pir which was reached before day break on 20 November. Here Brig Pritam Singh, Commander Poonch Brigade, who was accompanying Colonel Khajoor Singh shook hands with Brigadier Yadunath Singh Commander 5 Brigade, symbolising the link up of Poonch with Rajauri.[72]

Meanwhile the second phase had also gone in and the 8th Battalion under Lieut Colonel Maluk Singh after capturing point 6180 during the early hours of night 19/20 November, had by midnight, attacked point 6005, its second objective, which was strongly held by about 200 Pathans. As the leading company (company of the 9th Battalion attached to the 8th Battalion) under Captain Jagdish Singh approached the enemy position it came under very heavy fire. Jagdish Singh immediately asked for artillery support and under cover of fire from a troop of 25 pounders at Poonch, he led his company into the assault amidst shouts of "Jai Durge". The Pathans were, however, determined to fight it out till the end and had to be forced out of their trenches with bayonets. By 1.30 a.m. point 6005 had been captured and the Battalion was on its way to its next objective-Krishna Ghati. Krishana Ghati was held by about 80 to 100 Pathans but they do not

72. Interview Lt. Col. Sewa Nath with the author 1985

seem to have much stomach left for fighting and as the Dogras approached their position they fled without putting up any resistance. By 4.30 a.m. therefore, the whole Ridge from Krishna Ghati to Dani-Na-Pir was in the hands of the Poonch garrison. Throughout the attack on point 6605 Captain Jagdish Singh had shown outstanding leadership, per personal courage and gallantry coupled with marked presence of mind and cool determination for which he was awarded a Vir Chakra.[73]

As the projectdd jeep track to link Rajouri with Poonch was to cross the ridge at Krishna Ghati, it was necessary to extend the line of piquets on the ridge westwards to make the track safe from enemy interference. Consequently a second operation termed, "Operation Salotri", was launched on 24/25 November night so that points 5024 and 4665, west of Krishna Ghati, could be occupied. In the first phase of this operation, Salotri ridge was to be captured by 8th J&K Infantry as the leading scout, sepoy Nanak Chand, was approaching Salotri village at the foot of the Salotri ridge, he suddenly bumped into an enemy out post. Nanak Chand went to the ground as the enemy opened up on him with an light machine gun. Luckily the enemy gun was firing two high and taking advantage of this Nanak Chand crewled forward to the bunker and without caring for the severe burn that his hand received from the over heated barrel, he pulled the gun out of the enemy's hands, By then the whole of the Salotri ridge had come to life and the Dogras were under heavy, though not very affective, fire of the enemy. Colonel Maluk Singh then ordered two of his companies to to clear the village and passing through it with the other two companies attacked the ridge. The Dogras charged the enemy up hill with their bayonets glistening in the moonlight and by 2 a.m. the Salotri ridge was in their hands. Their total loss in this action was 6 men wounded. Sepoy Nanak Chand earned a Mentioned in Despatches.[74]

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73. D.K. Palit ~~Onkar~~ pp 218-219 221-222
74. Ibid pp 222-223.

In the second phase of "Operation Salotri" 11 J&K Militia captured point 5204 without a fight. The Ist Battalion then passed through and occupied point 4665 before midday on 25 November. The whole Salotri ridge was thus occupied by the Poonch Brigade, giving a practical shape to the Poonch Rajauri link up by road. The enemy reconciled to the situation that had been created by the construction of the road and made no attempt to alter it during the months' hostilities before the cease fire on 1st January 1949. The Poonch Brigade also utilised the period for consolidating its gains and undertook no other major operation to push the enemy back any further than had already been done.[75]

Poonch had thus been saved for the Indian Union when the Cease Fire took effect on 1st January 1949. Besides, thousands of Hindus and Sikh civilians- men women and children- had been saved from the bestiality of the Pakistani army and tribes-men; such as was suffered by the minorities at places where they had fallen into the clutches of the barbarians. Much of the credit for this must go to the units of the State Force that formed the Poonch garrison before the arrival of the Indian Army. Right from the start of active hostilities after the dominion of Pakistan came into being, these units, besides being devoid of any artillery support, had operated under severe logistic handicaps under the incapacitating effects of which any other army might have collapsed within the first few weeks of the operations ~~and not been able to continue~~ and not gone on to fight for months the way the J&K units did. As it is the units were ill equipped with regard to wireless communication, making it difficult, if not impossible at times, for the various headquarters to exercise any appreciable control over their units and sub units when separated from each other, but in the absence of any appropriate field supply organisation the isolation

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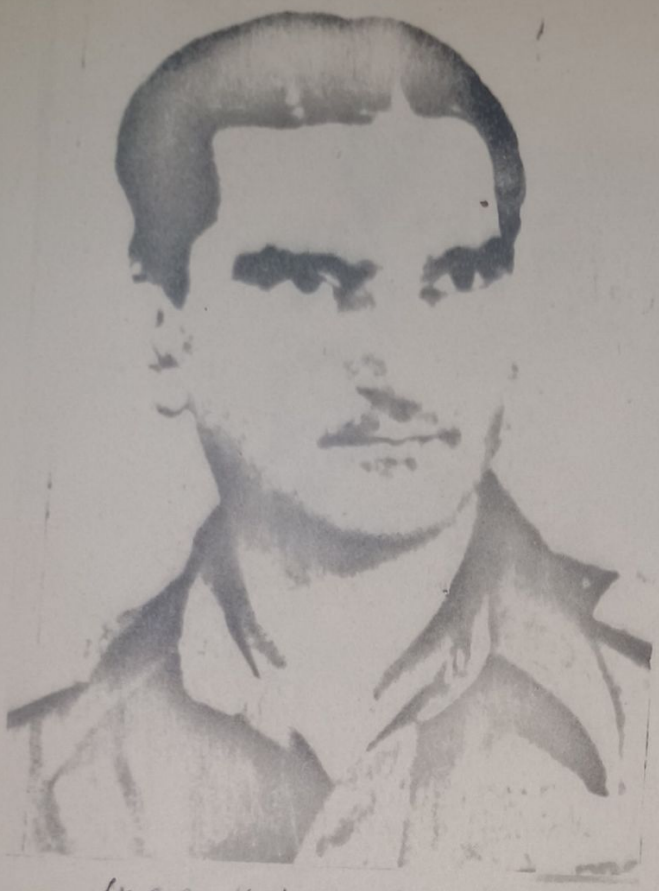
75. Ibid



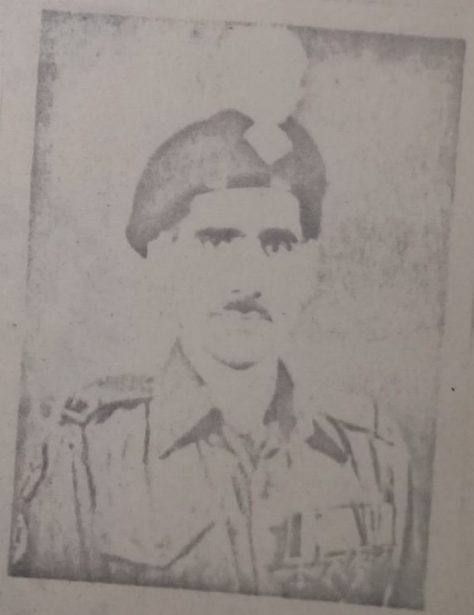
Lt Col Hira Nand Vr C

Capt Jagdish Singh Vr C

Major Risal Singh Vr C
13th J+K mountain Battery 1948

Pak 4·2 inch mortar captured by 8th J+K Infantry

Subedar Kanshi Ram VrC



Havildar Major Budhi Singh VrC

Brigadier Pritam Singh (IA) Commander Poonch Brigade
with three State Force Battalion Commanders
L to R. Lieut Colonel Maluk Singh, Brig Pritam Singh, Lieut Colonel Hira Nand, Lieut Colonel Khajoor

Relaxing after Poonch - Rajouri Link-up
1 Brig Pritam Singh 2 Lt Col Maluk Singh 3. Lt Col Pachranda

of the garrisons holding out at various places in Poonch territory had been complete. When the local procurement of supplies became impossible either because of non availability or enemy action these garrisons had to struggle for subsistance in addition to warding off continuous enemy attacks on their position. The greatest handicap, however, had been the cutting off of their ammunition supply from its source-arsenals in Pakistan. With the very means of fighting having been denied to them not much could have been expected from the State troops engaged in the defence of Poonch. And yet exceeding all expectations these troops had held on to Poonch with little else than their indomitable will to fight on to the last. Indeed the determination, courage and endurance exhibited by the State Troops during this crucial period; be it while they pushed on from place to place into unknown situations, marching for miles in torrential rain and pitch darkness; carrying their heavy weapons, ammunition and essential tools themselves; with no hope of finding fuel and cover at halts; out of communication with the headquarters and assailed by rumours of defeats and annihilations on other fronts; or while they struck tenaciously to their defences, conserving their ammunition to extract the maximum value from every round and suffering privation to make their low stocks of rations last longest;[76] reflects the greatest credit on the Brigade Commander Brigadier Krishna Singh and all officers and men that formed part of the heroic garrison of Poonch. Even greater credit is due to those troops for the protection they afforded to thousands of innocent men, women and children of the area, who flocked to their posts to escape the brutality of Pakistani marauders. The safety of the refugees had always taken precedence over the troops own safety and no withdrawal

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76. Notes Brig Krishna Singh.

of any garrison, big or small, was ever planned without arranging for the evacuation of the refugees with full military protection. Ultimately when the troops were compelled to vacate parts of Poonch territory, (more for logistical reasons than enemy action), they threw up a defence around the town and held on to it doggedly, frustrating the enemy's all out efforts to get to his most coveted prize. Unfortunately the circumstances were such that while many an act of gallantry, valour, and sacrifice went un-noticed, none was every rewarded.

Even after the Indian Army assumed operational control in Poonch the State Force troops, that continued to form the bulk of the garrison, played a major role in operations that were conducted to push the enemy back to a safer distance from the Poonch town; while the link up with Rajauri, (which finally sealed the enemy's fate in Poonch), was carried out entirely by the State Force units of the Poonch garrison. In fact during the one year between the arrival of the Indian Army and the Cease Fire the State Force units wrote yet another saga of valour, devotion and sacrifice. Of course this time it was duly recognised and the force added fresh laurels to its name. During the period the Ist, 8th and the 9th Battalions had earned between themselves 13 Vir Chakras and numerous Mentions in Despatches.

OPERATIONS UNDER THE JAMMU BRIGADE

Ranbir Singh Pura Border[77]

After having been reorganised and reequipped the 3rd Rajputana Rifles was moved to the Ranbir Singh Pura border in the first week of January 1948. The aim was to check the enemy raids into State territory, which he was making for loot, murder, arson, abduction of women and all else for which the Pakistanis had earned notoriety. Here the Battalion was deployed as under :-

77. Based primarily on 3 J&K Rifles Unit History (1947-48) compiled by Captain Shiam Singh (Adjutant)

Battalion Headquarters - Ranbir Singh Pura
A Company with detachment 3 inch mortars - Madhin
B Company " " " " - Arnia
C Company " " " " - Badial Brahmana
D Company " " " " - Ramgarh Kherare

The Battalion remained on the border for about a month before being withdrawn to Jammu and during this period it frustrated many an attempt of Pakistani raiders to realise their brutal aim. To prevent the Raghunaths from interfering in their raids on the border villages the enemy launched a series of heavy attacks on Battalion posts during the middle of January. The first such attack came in at about 4 p.m. on 13 January or so when an enemy force, about a battalion strength, followed by an equal number of civilians armed with swords, axes, and spears tried to over run the 'C' Company defences at Badial, under cover of his light machine guns. The engagement, in which the enemy made repeated attempts to rush the company defences at Badial, under cover of his light machine guns. The engagement in which the company position lasted all night. At one stage the enemy had closed into about 30 yards of the defences, but Lieut Dwaraka Nath and his men stood their ground inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. The enemy finally broke off at 4 a.m. next morning, carrying away his dead except for five that lay too close to the defences.

The second attack by the enemy was carried out on about 15 January. This time it was 'D' Company positions under Lieut Lakh Ram at Ramgarh. The enemy attacked at dusk with a two company strength but the weight of the 'D' Company defensive fire, induced him to beat a hasty retreat just after a short and brisk engagement. Three days later the enemy as if trying out all the companies in turn, attacked 'B' Company position around Arnia village, with two hundred soldiers followed by 400 armed Pakistani civilians, who were to act as the

looters. The village was a big one and the perimeter around it was thinly held by the company. Never-the-less all attempts of the wolves to break through into the village were foiled due to the determination of the troops and their well arranged defensive fire. While the fire fight was still going on, two platoons of 9th J&K Militia, under Jemadar Punjab Singh, arrived at Arnia around mid night, to reinforce the company. Punjab Singh led his troops to the enemy's flank, forcing him to disengage and withdraw into Pakistan.

On 31st January 1948 the Battalion was relieved from the border by a battalion of the Indian Army and concentrated in Jammu cantt. The Battalion was then entrusted with the responsibility of manning the outer defences of Jammu Town.

Operations in the Riasi Area[78]

Meanwhile the Jammu Sector had been reorganised. While the responsibility for the security of the Jammu-Pakistan border was taken over by the Indian Army, defence of Riasi was made the responsibility of the Jammu Brigade which since the beginning of January 1948 was being commanded by Brigadier Krishna Singh. The Headquarters of the Jammu Brigade, however, continued to be located at Satwari as, besides its operational role in Riasi, it had administrative responsibility towards all State Force units operating in the Jammu area, including those under the operational control of the Indian Army, and this could best be under taken from a central place like Satwari. For carrying out its operational role the Brigade was allotted the 3rd J&K Rifles and two companies of the 9th Battalion J&K Militia. Consequently the 3rd Battalion moved out of Jammu to Riasi on 21 February 1948 and occupied Salal and the Ahndar Gali feature.

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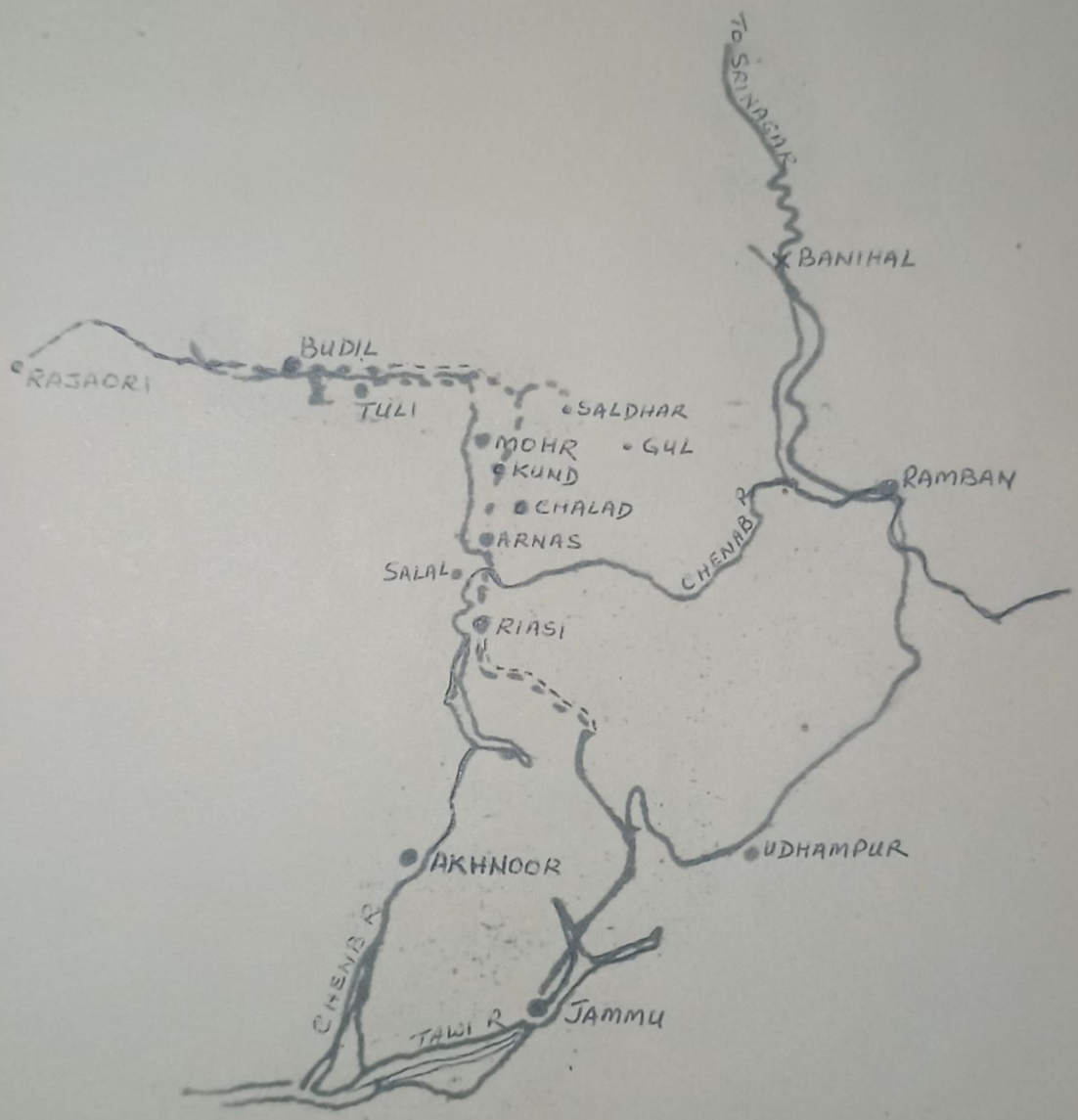
78. Ibid and official account of the part played by the Jammu Brigade as part of J&A Div in the J&K Operations.

THE RIASI SECTOR



The strength of the enemy poised against the Jammu Brigade in Riasi was about two infantry battalions. One of them, formed out of retired/released and 'on leave' personnel of the Pakistan Army and the deserters from the State Force, was known to be well trained and well equipped, while the other, comprising of locally trained troops was not too well trained or armed; its men being armed partly with 303 rifles and partly with muzzle loading and shot guns. The enemy was holding well dug positions on commanding features along the line Chaklas, Malas, Shajru, Panji Chapri, Markot, Tij and Kanthi. Through out the operations, therefore, our troops had the disadvantage of having to advance from the low to the high ridges.

After the 3rd Battalion had settled down, Brigadier Krishna Singh, Commander Jammu Brigade, planned a series of operations to evict the enemy from his positions in Riasi district. The first such operation was undertaken on 18 March when 'B' and 'D' companies were ordered to capture hill features Chalad and Kund respectively. Both the hill tops were still covered with snow and the enemy was believed to be holding each with a company strength. 'B' Company under Captain Lekh Ram went in first and attached Chalad at down supported by a section of 3 inch mortars and a detachment of medium machine guns. After a short but stiff engagement the enemy took to his heals leaving behind 8 dead. The position was captured at the cost of just two other rank wounded. 'D' Company under Captain Bagwan Singh then followed through and attacked Kund. Here the enemy appears to have been taken by surprise and after a feeble attempt to resist, he fled the post. By evening therefore both Chalad and Kund were in our hands along with rations and other stores stocked by the enemy on these posts.

On 19 March the tactical headquarters of the Battalion was moved from Salal to Dorlan a place between Chalad and Kund. The enemy on the other hand now concentrated on Lapri Hill. However,

in order to harras our troops he started sending down his snipers to a feature called Gazan Hill (which dominated Dorlan) for occasional shooting at the tactical headquarters. Although the fire from a range of near 1800 yards could not have been effective it did have a nuisance value. To put an end to this it was decided to occupy Gazan Hill with a platoon from 'D' Company on 25th March. Interestingly the enemy had also decided to establish a permanent piquet on this feature on the same day. The enemy platoon, however, reached about half an hour late and seeing our platoon taking up positions it sportingly withdrew to the main position at Lapri without as much as firing a shot. Subsequently on 2nd April when the Battalion Headquarters (main) joined up at Dorlan from Riasi the Gazan piquet was taken over by the Headquarters company and the platoon of 'D' Company returned to Kund.

The operation planned next was for the capture of the enemy main position at Lapri Hill on 15th April. This hill is approximately 10,000 ft high and even in April it had 7 to 10 feet of snow on it. The top of the hill isoval shaped running from north to south. The enemy had dug in positions along the top of the ridge which extended for about two miles. The strength of the enemy was estimated to be about two companies. The weakness of the enemy defences lay in being linear and this was taken full advantage of while planning the attack. The attack was to be in two phases; starting from the south end of the ridge the first half was to be captured in the first phase by 'B' Company while 'A' Company was to pass through and capture the northern half in the second phase. As a preliminary operation a platoon of 'B' Company was to secure the axis of advance by occupying a small feature enroute on the night previous to the attack.

The attack on 15 April progressed according to plan and after about 8 hours hard fighting Lapri was finally wrested from the enemy.

37 dead bodies of the enemy were counted while large quantities of rations and other stores were captured. One large, 4 feet high, grey coloured goat representing the enemys 'meat on hoof' ~~exfastxhigh~~ rations was adopted as the Battalion 'Mascot' and named Lapri. Own casualties were one killed (Sep Anant Ram) and six wounded. Soon after the capture of Lapri, Lieut Colonel Puran Singh Thapa moved his tactical headquarters to this feature.

Consequently upon the loss of Lapri the enemy evacuated Gul which was his base for troops manning Lapri and those fighting in the Ramban area. Though Gul was not physically occupied by our troops, patrols from Lapri were sent there frequently to keep it out of enemy hands. The successful conclusion of this operation elicited appreciation from the J&K Force Commander, Major General Kulwant Singh, which reads as follows:-

> "For Brig Krishna Singh from Force Comd(.) convey my best congratulations to 3 JKR on the magnificent manner in which ~~they~~ have been conducting ops leading upto the capture of Gul (.) OP through hard treacherous country and fighting against a fanticalm enemy they have shown first rate adm arrangements leadership and guts (.) well done"

Two days after the capture of Lapri, a Muslim Lambardar of Budhan arrived at the Battalion Tactical Headquarters with 30 Hindu men women and children whom he had given protection at the risk of his own life. While appreciating this ~~xttx~~ act of the Lambardar, Colonel Thapa sent word to all Muslims to help in recovering other abducted/converted non-Muslims in the area. As a result some 300 Hindu/Sikh men women and children were recovered and resettled in their original homes.

After his withdrawal from Lapri, the enemy had fallen back on Saldar-Kalwa-Mahor feature. This is a long feature running north-south and separated from the Lapri feature by the Plassu valley. The

Plassu Nala was fordable at all places during this part of the year and presented no obstruction to the attack on the Saldar-Kalwa-Mahor feature which was now planned. The Tactical Headquarters was moved to Kund while 'C' Company was moved from Salal to Gari-Gahar area, 15 miles to the south-west, in conformity with the general front line occupied by the Battalion. All the three enemy positions at Saldar, Kalwa and Mahor were planned to be attacked simulatanously on 20 May.

The three companies A, B and D commenced their advance on to Saldar, Kalwa, and Mahor respectively at 6 a.m. on 20 May as scheduled, and while A and B companies captured their objectives by 6 p.m. without resistance, 'D' company that was moving to Mahor via Dana encountered heavy enemy fire from Dada, a feature dominating its line of advance. The enemy was holding this high feature with about a platoon strength. The charge up the steep ascent to the enemy position was a real test of the men's andurance and they came out of it with flying colours. Dada was captured by 4 p.m. and the advance on Mahor continued. By the time the company reached Mahor at 7 p.m. the enemy had fled his position and the objective was captured without further resistance.

Although the objectives had been captured without much fighting this does not make the leadership displayed by the three company commanders, Captain Bhagwan Singh Bisht, Captain Kalyan Singh Salathia and Captain Lokh Ram Sharma and the courage and endurance of their men, any the less. In fact it was the courage and determination of these troops that shook the enemy morale and induced him to flee before the assault. That the victory was significant is borne by the fact that it was broadcast over the All India Radio and all national newspapers carried this story of bravery and endurance over a terrain that favoured the defender.

On 26 May the enemy ambushed a 'C' Company patrol. Reinforcements were rushed to extricate the patrol that fought valiantly against superior numbers of the enemy. The patrol had by then suffered one rifleman, Krishan Bahadur, killed. On arrival of reinforcements the enemy fled leaving behind three dead who were identified as soldiers of Pakistan army. Although the patrol had been brought back safely Colonel Thapa was not going to let the incident end here and he ordered 'C' Company to attack enemy positions at point 6500 and Sothai in retaliation. Consequently 'C' company under Captain Sansar Singh, with one platoon of 9 Militia under Command, attacked both these positions on 28 May and captured them after nearly 6 hours of fierce fighting in which 27 of the enemy were counted killed. In this action Rifleman Nar Bahadur made himself conspicuous by displaying great courage and gallantry in snatching away one light machine gun ffom an enemy even as he was firing with it.

While the Battalion continued to advance, capturing one enemy piquet after the other, there was change in command of the Brigade. Lieut Colonel Bhagwan Singh took over command of the Brigade with effect from 26 May 1948 in the same rank, from Brigadier Krishna Singh who was posted out to command the Kashmir Brigade. During the offensive operations planned under the new commander, the Battalion captured Chulena ridge on 5th June, Khataji on 9th July Malkumba on 26th October, Khandi Dhar on 27th October, Chaoru Sira on 12th November and Sar on 18th November. In between ('A' Company at Malkhamba had to beat back a very heavy counter attack on Khataji on 9th October. The total number of casualties suffered by the Battalion during these operations were one Rifleman, Chandra Bahadur, killed (at Khandi Dhar) and one officer, Lieut Sonit Singh, and 4 other ranks wounded. Some platoons of 9th J&K Militia that cooperated in these operations suffered one JCO andone other rank killed and 3 other ranks wounded.

Although the troops had to face enemy resistance on every piquet that they captured logistical problems had out weighed enemy opposition. More so when the only bridge over the Chenab river, over which supplies from Riasi used to be brought forward, gave way. Thereafter till about a fortnight, before alternative arrangements for supplies could be made, the troops were forced to live on the country. Subsequently supplies were moved 27 miles from Jammu to Tanda over the Akhnoor bridge by vehicles and for 15 miles from Tanda to Thakrakot by mules. Ultimately from Thakrakot to Arnas supplies were carried on porters. This was not a very satisfactory arrangement during the rainy season when all the rations, (other than tinned) reached Arnas in a very bad state; nearly fifty percent having been rendered unfit for human consumption. The supply situation had therefore seriously delayed operations in this area.

After the capture of Chaoru, Sira and Sar, stage was set for an attack on Budil and the final Riasi-Rajauri link up. It was generally believed that the task of capturing Budil would not be an easy one and that it might take a long time to accomplish because ofthe tactical and logistical problems that were involved. Budil formed the lower southern (south-western) flank of the enemys front which has extended some miles to the high hills due north (north-east). As the northern (north-eastern) flank was strongly held by the enemy the tactical requirement was for the Battalion to roll up the enemy flank from the north down wards. In fact the 3rd Battalion had already been deployed with this requirement in view and while three rifle companies formed the Battalion's right flank, there was only one company on the left flank some 20 miles down ~~south~~ (south-west?) opposite Budil. The right flanking attack, however, entailed making of a long detour of many miles over treacherous terrain devoid of roads and tracks, necessitating the use of a large number of porters for lifting the rations, essential stores, heavy

weapons and equipment and ammunition of the Battalion, and making it operationally mobile. As this flank was strongly held by the enemy the operation for the capture of Budil was likely to get prolonged making the logistical problem even more acute. Air supply was obviously the answer but these could not have been arranged in view of the existing commitments of the Indian Air Force and its limited resources in those days. Lieut Colonel Bhagwan Singh, the Brigade Commander, was not, however to the deterred, and as a solution decided to attack frontally with the company on the left flank while the rest of the Battalion made a show on the right flank. In this he certainly took a risk but it was a calculated one. Budil was on the enemy's line of communication with his base in the Rajauri-Thana Mandi area and its capture was likely to force him to abandon his positions north of it. The surprise that would be achieved by the frontal attack was likely to offset the disadvantage of attacking with such a small force as was available for this purpose. Because of the unorthodoxy of the plan and the element of risk that was involved, Colonel Bhagwan Singh moved his tactical headquarters to 'C' company area which formed the Battalions left flank directly opposite Panji, on the shortest route to Budil, and took over personal control of the operation. The commander brought with him the 3 inch mortar platoon of the 9th Battalion (which was at that time attached with J&K Training Centre) to provide fire support to 'C' company during its attack.

The operation commenced on 23 November with 'C' Company under Captain Sansar Singh on the left flank advancing on Panji and 'D' Company under captain Shiam Singh on right flank on to Chhandi. Colonel Bhagwan Singh along with his Brigade Major, Major Ishar Dass, moved with 'C' company, while Colonel Puran Singh Thapa moved with the right flank. Both places were captured on the same day but while no resistance was met at Panji, the enemy at Chhandi put up

stiff resistance before surrendering the post. During the fight at Chandi Jemadar Dan Singh and Naik Dhan Singh displayed great presence of mind and courage in leading their men on to the objective while Rifleman Jagat Bhadur made himself conspicuous by snatching two rifles, .303 and 700 rounds from the enemy in hand to hand fighting. Jagat Bahadur was mentioned in despatches for this act of gallantry.

On 24 November, while the left flank advanced to Tuli, 5 miles short of Budil, the advance of the right flank got stalled due to logistaical reasons. At Tuli the Brigade Commander was met by Haji Mohammand Khan who had earlier sent a written message to the Indian Army requesting them to liberate Budil and consequently his own village Kund Radhan to the east of it, from Pakistani raiders who were perpetrating atrocities on the local population. He offered to guide the army into Budil. As the enemy was on the run offering no resistance opposite the left flank the right think would have been to press the attack home on the left without waiting for the right flank to make the move, but on a suggestion from the Battalion Commander, Colonel Bhagwan Singh decided to halt for a day at Tuli to allow the right to catch up. When, however, the right flank failed to make any appreciable progress even on the 25th, Commander Jammu Brigade decided to go ahead with his attack. Tactically Budil was not an ideal place to attack. It has a semi circle of hills around it, each one of which was required to be piquetted before the little town could be entered. Besides there was the initial requirement of ~~and this had to be done after~~ crossing the Ans river which separated Tuli from Budil and was within rifle range of the enemy perched on hill tops. The requirement of troops for the attack was ~~The troops available for the attack were, therefore, most insufficient.~~ therefore much more than was available to Colonel Bhagwan Singh. After deploying some troops for the protection of the flank and some at Panji, Gajadarman, and Tuli for securing the line of communication all that was left for the attack was one weak company (C) of the 3rd Battalion and two weak

platoons of the 9th J&K Militia, but with the possibility of surprise being achieved inspite of one days delay at Tuli, the try was considered well worth it. Consequently on night 25th/26th November, the ~~little~~ small force accompanied by the Brigade Commander and the Brigade Major advanced from Tuli and after crossing the Ans river during the hours of darkness, occupied the two features on either side of Budil without oppositdon before 8 a.m. There now being left no other troops for entry into Budil, Colonel Bhagwan Singh, accompanied by Major Ishar Das and an escort of five, availed of this honour. The party was followed at a distance by the company HQ, the 3 inch mortar platoon, and the detachment of medium machine guns. The enemy fired a few light machine gun bursts and rifle shots from the top of hills dominating Budil but that he was soon taken care of by our troops who had already climbed to the top of these features. The enemy fled from all his postions around Budil leaving behind one dead body from which were recovered three currency notes issued by the Government of Pakistan.

Budil was empty when the commander entered it. Most of the Hindus and Sikhs had been killed by the raiders and others had been converted. The entire population, harrassed by the raiders had left their village and taken to the hills. Only one Sikh boy, now converted, was lurking around the village. Taking the commander's party to be Pakistanis he, pretending to be a devout Muslim, welcomed them and warned them of the possible Indian attack. The boy's joy knew no bounds when he was told by the Commander that it was the Indian Army that had arrived. He jumped and danced, shouting "Jai Hind" at the top of his voice. The word was then sent to the civilians hiding in the jungles to return to their village and the next day the village was once again humming with activity.[79]

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79. Lt Col Bhagwan Singh War on Two Fronts pp 156-158.

Evidently the various formation commanders had been a little sceptical about the success of this daring attack by the Jammu Brigade Commander. There was therefore a spontaneous applause from all on the capture of Budil, so soon and so easily. All formation commanders, however, seemed apprehensive of ill treatment of Muslims by the troops probably because of such fears expressed by senior State Government officials who were not kindly disposed towards the State army. This was reflected in practically all the complimentary messages that th were flashed out by the various formation commanders Typical of this was the message from the Army Commander which is reproduced below :-

> "~~Following~~ Personal from Army ~~Commander~~ Comdr to Lt Col~~onel~~ Bhagwan Singh(.) ~~quote~~ best congratulations on capture of Budil and op you are carrying out (.) ensure Muslims and non Muslim are treated alike and there is no maltreatment of Muslims(.) this will be your personal responsibility".

The State Force, however, had too long a tradition of toleration, discipline and gentlemanliness behind them, to indulge in barbarity against innocent and helpless people and the local inhabitants had been treated with kindness and consideration even before the receipt of these directions from above.

With the capture of Budil, and subsequent long range patrolling, all organised enemy resistance in the whole area north of Riasi and south of Pir Panjal on the one hand, and between the Jammu-Srinagar road in the east to Rajouri in the west, on the other, had ended. A vast area of 2500 square miles of the State had thus been liberated and its population rehabilitated without distinction of religion casts or creed; and all this done by the Jammu Brigade with just the 3rd Battalion, Raghunath, and two companies of 9th J&K Militia. While a total of about 400 of the enemy are believed to have been killed in these operations and the same number wounded, 10 rifles .303, 39

muzzle loading guns, 10 hand grenades, 23 Bren Magazines, 1430 rounds of .303 ammunition and numerous other weapons of sorts were captured from the enemy during the fighting. The significance of this successful operation also lay in the fact that this was a purely State Force affair; both with regard to its planning as well as execution.

After the operations in the Riasi area, Jammu Brigade functioned under the 21 Line of Communication and was allotted the task of defend-ing the border from Madhopur to Munawar Tawi with its headquarters at Miran Sahib. Brigadier N S Rawat took over command of the Brigade from Lieut Colonel Bhagwan Singh towards the middle of 1949.

OPERATIONS UNDER KASHMIR BRIGADE[80]

Apart from arranging reinforcements for the Skardu garrison, the Kashmir Brigade had to cope with the threat from enemy raiding parties crossing over the Pir Panjal along the old Moghul route on to Shopiyan and thereby cutting the Banihal- Srinagar road. In fact Hindu and Sikh refugees who had fled from the Bramgala and Budil areas after these had been occupied by the enemy had reached Shopiyan in early December 1947, and brought information that the Pir Panjal and Budil Pir passess were already in enemy hands. Alarmed by this news a company of the Ist Battalion under Captain Prithi Singh, (that had followed formed part of the famous force of Brigadier Rajinder Singh and had now been reinforced with the rear parties of the 7th and 8th Battalion at Srinagar), was despatched to Shopiyan in the middle of December 1947. Company headquarters with one platoon was established at Shopiyan while a platoon each was deployed at Mirpur (on the old Moghul route) and Manjipur (on the Budil route). No enemy activity was, however, notice during the next two months, probably because of the passes having become snow bound. The threat

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80. Based on narrative contained in Jammu & Kashmir Arms (pp 253-5

reappeared with the melting of the snows in March 1948 and consequently the Shopiyan force was reinforced with a squadron of the J&K Body Guard Cavalry from Jammu. Thereafter while the cavalry squadron remained at Shopiyan, the company was moved further up the Pir Panjal track to Dubjan.

All remained quiet till 12 May when a patrol from Dubjan, while on its way to Aliabad Sarai (10,000 ft) 3048 metres, was ambushed at the outskirts of the village. Six riflemen were killed and one taken prisoner. The prisoner was tied hand and foot and thrown into the Rambiana Nala but he had a providential escape and rejoined the company after four days. This incident was the first indication that the enemy had crossed the Pass in strength and had taken up positions east of the Pir Panjal Range. This was a matter of grave concern for the Kashmir Brigade, and when Brigadier Krishna Singh took over the Brigade at the end of May, he immediately planned to evict the enemy and occupy the pass as soon as the snow conditions permitted it.

On Ist/2nd July, by which time the snow line had receded to above ~~10000~~ 3048 ft, (Pir Panjal Pass being ~~11,400~~ 3475 ft. high), the 4 Dubjan Company under Captain Prithi Singh, supported by a section of medium machine guns of the 4th Battalion (that had been sent up from Srinagar a few days earlier), advanced up to Aliabad Sarai and quietly occupied heights dominating the village. As soon as it way day light, the medium machine guns opened up on the enemy position while the company charged, with bayonets glistening in the morning sun. Before long Aliabad was captured and own patrols that were pushed out to the Pass subsequently reported no enemy there. By 6th July Captain Prithi Singh had occupied the Pass. Evidently the enemy was not strong enough to dislodge the Dogras from the Pass and for the next few days contended himself with sniping and harassing fire on the company.

The occupation of the Pass had been easy enough, but the real problem lay in maintaining the post at such a height and so far out

from Shopiyan. Besides the distance, any maintenance column from Shopiyan would have to pass through an area still infested by the enemy and the maintenance activity was prone to enemy interference. This was demonstrated on 14 July when a column of 68 pony-loads, escorted by a dismounted troop of the Body Guard Cavalry and a machine guns section, all under Captain Khajoor Singh, was attacked by the enemy after it has crossed Aliabad on 15 July. Although the escort prevented the enemy from getting anywhere near the supplies, it had to fight all the way up to the post to keep the enemy at an arms length. The rations and ammunition reached the company not a day too soon as by them the situation regarding both had become quite critical.

Being reinforced thus the Dogras at the Pass organised some offensive action and at 2 a.m. on 16 July two adhoc platoons, comprising men from the infantry and the newly arrived troop of cavalry, under Captain Khajoor Singh moved out to lay an ambush for the enemy who had made it a routine ~~to occupy~~ of occupying positions dominating the Pass during the day and from there subject the company to harassing fire. Unfortunately, before an ambush could be laid, Captain Khajoor Singh unexpectedly bumped into an enemy position where about 15 men were having their pre-dawn meal (it being the month of Ramzan). The enemy fled leaving behind one dead. Surprise having been lost the ambush party returned to base without further action.

The enemy around the pass, though still not in a position to dislodge the Dogras from their positions, had gained enough strength to undertake effective offensive measures. On 19 July a large party of the enemy occupied the feature north of the Pass and from there directed heavy fire on the company position. In this fire the company suffered one killed and one wounded. The enemy continued shelling and harassing fire from this position till 24 July when the State troops launched a two platoon attack, and evicted the enemy from his position. A platoon piquet under Jemadar Dharam Singh was established on this feature to prevent the enemy from occupying it again.

SHOPIYAN - PIRPANJAL AREA

Dulgan
Aliabad

The Pir Panjal post was rationed upto 30 July only. Consequently on 26 July the Kashmir Brigade Headquarters arranged another maintenance Column escorted by two companies of the 5th Battalion under Major Nischant Singh. By this time, however, the enemy had occupied the Mastivanj feature over looking Aliabad, in great strength and even with the best effort Major Nischant Singh could not dislodge him from there. The supply column, therefore, got held up short of Aliabad with no chance of it ever reaching the post.

With the supply line to the post cut, it was now the enemy's chance to attack. He was, however, not prepared to take any chance and did not attack till 8 August, by which time he had been able to concentrate one battalion (the so called First Haidari Battalion of 'Azad Kashmir) supported by 3 inch mortars against our position on the Pass. The 'Haidaris' were, however, in for a surprise. The defenders held their fire till the enemy was not more than 150 yards away and then let go with all they had. Shocked, the 'Haidaris' turned face and fled leaving behind numerous dead. Perhaps goaded by their Pakistani masters the 'Haidaris' made two more assualts that day each proving more disasterous than the other. The day ended up with the enemy leaving behind 47 dead bodies which lay scattered on the hill side.

Although the days honours had gone to the defenders, their plight now was such as not to allow them to hold out any longer. Not only were they without rations, but their ammunition had also got exausted due to the days fighting. There was no wireless set with the Post and the line to Dubjan had been cut. In fact they had been out of touch with their rear headquarters for more than a week. Captain Prithi Singh, therefore, decided to abondon the Pass while the enemy was still licking his wounds and withdraw to Dubjan during the night.

The withdrawal proceeded according to plan; the main post withdrawing first and joining up with Jemadar Dharam Singh's post. The enemy remained oblivious of this move and also of the subsequent move of the company out of number two post but the withdrawal further down was seriously handicaped by the stretcher case that had to be carried. Jamedar Dharam Singh had been wounded in the thigh during the day's fighting and had to be carried down hill on an improvised stretcher. It was thus that by 2 a.m. the company had covered a distance of only a mile and half. To quicken the pace of withdrawal and to get away as far from the enemy as possible under the cover of the night, Dharam Singh was made to sit on a pony supported by men of his platoon. This did step up the speed of withdrawal to some extent but it was not long before it was day light and further movement had to be continued in full view of the enemy and under his effective fire. The enemy was, however, not allowed to close in by own medium machine guns that covered the withdrawal. The column reached Dubjan by last light having suffered nine killed and four wounded; besides suffering the two frost bite cases. Captain Khajoor Singh, Daffadar Bir Singh Sowar Rasal Singh (~~[illegible]~~) and Jemadar Dharam Singh (~~[illegible]~~) were among those who were mentioned in Despatches for gallantry during action.

It was now clear that Pir Panjal operation was quite beyond the limited resources of Kashmir Brigade. Accordingly the sector was taken over by Srinagar Division, and 3/9 Jat alongwith the remainder of 5 J&K Light Infantry was moved to Shopiyan for further operations. This force ultimately reoccupied the Pass in early September and that put the final seal on enemy activity across the Pir Panjal.

REORGANISATION

Although the Maharaja had put his seal on the State's accession to the Indian Union on 26th October 1947 there still remained certain amount of uncertainty regarding the future of the State; not because of any doubts with regard to the outcome of the war but on account of the stipulation imposed by the Government of India themselves that the accession was subject to ascertaining the will of the

people. It is not for us to discuss here the sagacity or otherwise of this precondition for the final accession of the State to the Indian Union. Suffice it to say that this self imposed binding became rather awkward for India when the same was endorsed by Security Council and a plebesite under the aegis of the United Nations was sought to bem mad-e the main plank in the settlement of the Kashmir dispute. However, what really concerns us is the fact that the uncertainty generated by the possibility of a plebesite taking place in the State to decide the accession issue, greatly hampered complete and outright integration of the State Force with the Indian Army. As a matter of fact, the State Force was allowed to retain its separate entity not only during them period of the war but also for many years after the cease fire. At one stage during 1948 there was even talk of the State being allowed to maintain a full, fighting, infantry division, complete with suporting arms and services. Infact a proposal to this effect was prepared by Lieut Colonel Kashmir Singh Katoch in mid 1948, under instructions of the Maharaja who continued to be the Commander-in-Chief of the State Army. Nothing, however, came off it, probably due to the tussel that was going on between the Maharaja and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah over the control of the State Force.

Some little changes in the State Forces that were considered very essential, were carried out never-the-less. One was the disbandment of the Garrison Police Companies and the raising of two Pioneer Companies in their place with effect from 23rd December 1947. All fit men from the Garrison Police were absorbed in the Pioneer Companies while those considered unfit were sent on release. Most of the Muslims from the various units of the State Force were transferred to these companies to protect them from Pakistani subversion. After the cease fire all Muslim personnel of the State Army were given the option of migrating to Pakistan. Some of them (including officers) whose homes lay on the Pakistani side of the cease fire line did exercise

this option and were escorted across the border. The other change was in the organisation of the two brigade headquarters at Jammu and Srinagar. The various brigade headquarters in the State Army were never organised to function operationally; there being no such requirement in the past. With the change in the requirement now the br brigade headquarters underwent some organisational change in May 1948 and one staff officer, one intelligence officer, one Jemadar Head Clerk and one Havildar clerk were added to the establishment of each.[81]

Re-Raising of 1st J&K Mountain Battery

Guns and equipment for raising a 3.7 How Four Gun battery, which had been demanded in the beginning of October 1947 and the supply of which had been approved by the Government of India much before the invasion of the State by Pakistan, were finally received in the State at the end of December 1947 or early January 1948. Consequently the ex-servicemen of the erstwhile 1st and 2nd J&K Mountain Batteries were summoned and the 1st J&K Mountain Battery was reraised on 22nd January 1948. We have seen how at the time of transfer of the batteries to the Indian Army in 1942 all the gunner officers of the State had opted for service in the State and how they had all been absorved in the State Infantry. Most of these officers were still in service and were readily available for re-transfer to the artillery. Major G S Dutta took over as the first Battery Commander, Captain Madan Lal MC (of World War II Fame) as the Battery Captain and Lieut Risal Singh and Krishan Kumar Datta as the two section commanders. All the officers and the entire rank and file (other than mule drivers) being ex-gunners no training was required to make the Battery operational and none was given; the Battery being moved for road opening duties between Beri Pattan and Seri immediately after its raising. Beside being given no training the Battery was terribly short of some important items of

81. Note: Lt Colonel Puran Singh Saymbal

equipment. Never-the-less the officers and men egged on by the memories of the past glory of the J&K Gunners produced results least expected of them under the circumstances. Unfortunately Major Dutta in his eagerness to be out right in the front drove his jeep over a mine and had his leg blown up. Ultimately his leg had to be amputated and he was never able to rejoin the Battery. The Battery was, therefore, under the command of Major Madan Lal (since promoted) when after a months stay at Beri Pattan it moved to the Titwal sector. The Battery earned even a better name in Tithwal. The story goes that long after the cease fire, General Milne who was the enemy regimental commander at Tithwal made inquisitive enquiries from Lt General Kumaramangalam while he was attending a course at Larke Hill (England) about the Indian Battery that was operating against the Pakistanis there, and openly admitted that the Pakistanis were very much impressed by the performance of this Indian battery. Be it as it may the Battery became much in demand after its showing at Tithwal and despite the fact that the Battery was long due for rest after having been in action continuously ever since its raising, it was requisitioned for operations for the capture of the Zojila Pass and onward advance to Kargil. The Battery thus remained engaged in active operations right from the day of its raising till the cease fire without a break. It was in the Zojila operation that Captain Risal Singh earned his Vir Chakra. Captain Risal Singh was the Battery 2nd-in-command but in addition he performed the duties of Forward observation officer with every battalion that attacked. Throughout the advance from Zojila to Dras Risal Singh worked with great skill, zeal and endurance in the most adverse conditions which contributed greatly to the success of the operation. The Battery suffered four killed among whom was the dashing young officer Lieut K K Datta. Lieut Datta was posthumously Mentioned in Despatches for gallantry. Subedars ~~for gallantry displayed during these operations.~~ Krishen Singh and Ibek Singh and six other ranks were also Mentioned in Despatches for gallantry [82].

82. Interview Major Risal Singh VrC Jammu 1985

Steps Towards Integration

Even as a general status quo was being maintained with regard to the J&K State Force, some steps leading to its integration with the Indian Army had been taken during the years of war; more as a matter of convenience than policy. For instance Indian Short Service Commission was super imposed on the State Commissioned Officers with effect from 1st November 1947 to overcome the problem of putting them in command of Indian troops. Pays and allowances of all ranks were also raised with effect from this date to make them at par with those of the Indian Army; the extra amount involved being paid by the Government of India. The Indian Army took over the administrative and organisational control of the State Force in addition to the Operational Control with effect from 4th September 1948, even as the Maharaja continued to be its Commander-in-Chief.[83]

State Commission Continued

The take over of the administrative and organisational control by the Indian Army definitely helped to solve many problems of the State Force in trying to keeping itself operationally functional, but not the problem of shortage of officers ~~as a result of~~ created by war casualties and desertion by the Muslim component. Consequently Maharaja Hari Singh as the Commander-in-Chief of the State Force was obliged to continue grant of State Commission to selected candidates long after the State had acceeded to the Indian Union. A batch of ten civilian candidates had already been selected in September 1947 for commission in the State Force as a matter of normal course. This batch had just started its training at the Training School when the State was invaded and with the staff at the school having been pulled out to fight the raiders as part of the Brig Rajinder Singh's force, the training of

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83. Notes Lt Col Puran Singh Sambyal.

the cadets got totallyx disrupted. As a matter of fact the cadets themselves had to be employed on sentry duties in the cantonment to take the place of those despatched to the front. After the arrival of the Indian Army the Training School was shifted to Udhampur and the training of the cadets was resumed. As the number of cadets in this batch was too small to meet the increasing demand of the State Force another batch of nine from suitable serving soldiers was selected by the Maharaja in February 1948 for the grant of state commission. Both the batches then trained together for six months after which the newly commissioned officers joined the various units of the State Force. It is gratifying to note that while most of these officers subsequently made it to the selection grade, to command the various units of the regiment, one of them Major General Goverdhan Singh Jamwal went on to command an Infantry Division. Another batch of 13 from among servicemen was selected in July 1948 and put through six months training at the J&K Training School; the new officers joining their units in the beginning of 1949.[84]

The Cease Fire and After

The cease fire on 1 January 1949 brought the much needed respite to the units of the State Force. Although most units contined to remain deployed along the cease fire line, peace time routine slowly returned and the process of refitting and reorganisation of the units started. The Training Centre worked double time to turn out the large number of young soldiers that was required to make up manpower deficiencies in the various State Force battalions, batter time. The 2nd Rifles and the 4th and 6th Infantry had more or less disintegrated completely during the war and it had to be, in a way "reraised." We have already seen how the Body Guards were made

84. Interview Maj Gen Govardhan Singh Jamwal, Lt Col Hoshnak Singh and Major Dina Nath.

7th J&K Infantry LMG post in Tithwal Sector

State Forces War Memorial at Satwari

His Highness Maharaja Hari Singh with Officers and JCOs of the re-raised 4th J+K Infantry 1948

Havildar Gurdev Singh AC

operationally fit before the ceasefire itself. The 4th Battalion Fateh Shivaji was 'reraised' at Pathankot under Lieut Colonel Prakash Chand in 1949, over the nucleus of Lieut Labh Singh's company that had escaped unscathed from Kohala in 1947. The class composition of the battalion was now fixed as Dogras and Sikhs in equal numbers. Reraising of the 6th Battalion was taken in hand only after May 1950 when the prisoners of war were repatriated. The task was entrusted to the old Commanding Officer, Lieut Colonel Abdul Majid Khan. The Muslim element was sought to be made up with the enrolement of Kashmir Muslims, a Community hitherto debarred from joining the Army on grounds of having been classified as non-martial.

Of the two battalions, the 7th and the 9th, that had suffered a split as a result of the exegencies of deployment during the war, the 7th got united at Srinagar (as noted earlier) before the Cease Fire. The 9th was re-formed as a battalion immediately after the Cease Fire, when its two companies were pulled out from Poonch to join up with the other two at Jammu.[85]

For nearly two years after the ceasefire the situation on the state borders remained tense and shooting incidents of varying magnitude occured frequently. In one such incident in January 1950, involving a patrol of the Ist Battalion, the Patrol Leader Captain Hamir Singh and five other ranks were killed. By 1951, however, the threat of another war between India and Pakistan over Kashmir had greatly receded. By then the future of the state had become more or less clear while the Cease Fire Line was to decide the portions that were to remain with India and Pakistan respectively. As the future of the State Force was linked with the future of the State, by 1951 it had become clear that the process of integration would follow soon.

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85. Interview/Col Colonels Puran Singh (Sambyal), Dalbir Singh, Abey Singh Labh Singh and Sunit Singh Pathania.

The general policy of the Government of India at that time being for the reduction in the armed forces, it was felt that all the nine battalions of the State could not be absorbed in the Indian Army. Consequently the 5th, 6th and 8th battalions were disbanded in 1951. The other State units now began to be relieved in the operational areas by the Indian army units and some of these were even moved to peace areas outside the State. It was thus that between 1953 and 1957 the 2nd Body Guard was granted a tenure at Gaya; the 3rd moved to Ranikhat; the Ist battalion served at YOL Camp, Pathankot and Gurdaspur; the 4th at Ferozepur and the 9th battalion in Nasirabad, Lucknow and Calcutta while the 7th was moved to Jodhpur for training whereafter it served at Kota and Delhi Cantt.[86]

The Jammu Brigade Headquarters under Brigadier N S Rawat was moved to Poonch in April 1952. Here it was allotted Bhimber Gali-Mendhar- Mandi sector which it was to hold with seven infantry battalions (mostly Indian Army) as part of 25 Infantry Division.[87]

THE FATEH SHIVJI SETTLES SCORES[88]

The Fateh Shivji who had been victims of foul play in the Kohala area in 1947 had scores to settle with the Pakistanis and had been itching for such an opportunity. They got this God-sent opportunity when, while on collective training at Ferozepur in March 1956, they were ordered to move to Hussainiwala Headworks and take over the protection of the Headworks from 7 Border Scouts. In early 1947 the Radcliffe Commission had been appointed to deal with the disputes arising out of the partition of Punjab. In the dispute on Hussainiwala Headworks on the Sutlej river, the Headworks and the

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86. Ibid
87. Notes Brig N S Rawat
88. Based on Draft History J&K Rifles and interview Lt Col Moshnak Singh with the author at Jammu 1985

area immediately around, including the Bund and the banks on the Pakistan side, was allotted to India. This award was, however, not accepted by Pakistan, who disputed the allottment of the Bund to India. Pending settlement of the dispute it had been agreed upon by the two governments that while the responsibility for repair and maintenance of the Bund would continue to be that of the Indian Union, no troops would be located on or around it. Now during the unprecedented floods at the close of 1955 the right guide wall of the Headworks got damaged and the Indian government was obliged to carry out the necessary repairs so that the water could be channelled into the Dipalpur canal, a feeder supplying water to the territory in Pakistan. Under this obligation Indian engineers started work on the Bund but when they started lifting earth for this purpose from the 'Bela' adjacent to the Bund, the Pakistanis objected and began to use military force to prevent Indian labour from undertaking this task. 'Bela' is a stretch of land about 400 yards in length and approximately thirty yards in width, extending laterally alongside the right guide bund of the Headwork, on the far side of the river. It has sandy soil and is covered with thick elephant grass. As per the Radcliffe awaad the 'Bela' belonged to India but it was argued by Pakistan that the dispute was over the bund automatically covered the adjacent 'Bela'. Anyway, dispute or no dispute, repair to the bund had to be carried out and the Indian government determined to meet force with force. It was under these circumstances that 4th J&K (Fateh Shivji) was ordered to take over the protection of the Indian Engineers and their labour while they undertook repairs to the bund.

The 4th Battalion under Lieut Colonel Vakil Singh moved to the scene on 8 March and on the 9th morning the 'B' and 'C' companies under Captains Ajit Singh and Hoshnak Singh occupied 'Bela' on the far side of the river close to the Bund, taking the Pakistanis completely by surprise. Tactically it would have been advisable to occupy the

HUSSAIN-C-WALLA HEADWORKS

Sketch by Lt Col Hoshiar Singh Jamwal

Bund itself, but the Battalion had strict instructions not to do so in view of the earlier agreement between the two governments of keeping the Bund free of troops. For the same reason when 'D' and 'A' companies under Major Mahel Singh and Major Reshpal Singh respectively were pushed out to the far bank, they also took up positions in the low lying areas between the bank of the river and perimeter bund to the left of the Headworks. Both these localities of the battalion could not support each other mutually due to the lie of the the ground and the intervening Headworks.

The Pakistanis reacted sharply to the Indian move and by 10th March they had concentrated an infantry brigade, supported by a regiment of field artillery and a squadron of medium tanks. On the Indian side 167 Infantry Brigade under Brigadier M M Badshah moved up from Ferozepur to support 4th J&K Infantry in case it became necessary. To provide fire support to the Battalion in case it was attacked a 4.2 inch mortar battery was moved up and the 3 inch mortars of all battalions were brigaded under Captain Labh Singh of the 4th Battalion. All was now set for the imminent showdown.

On 18th/19th March at about 11 p.m. the Pakistanis scored on the Indians tactically by occupying the bund (in complete disregard of the earlier agreement between the two countries) and concentrating around the perimeter. They sited a light machine gun nest at the nose of the right guide bund and assured of covering fire from here, they began converging on our positions in the 'Bela'.

The position of the two companies in the 'Bela' was very awkward tactically. Sandwitched between the bund in the front and the fast flowing Sutlej in the rear, the position was deprived of not only reasonable field of fire but also the necessary room for tactical manoeuvre. In fact with the Pakistani positions on the bund dominating the area the Fateh Shiva were a sitting duck to the enemy.

To make matters worse the 4th Battalion was under orders not to open fire until fired upon; no matter how intense the provocation. As a result the Pakistanis closed in without any hitch or hinderance to a distance from where they could hurl taunt and abuse on our troops. Ultimately, taking the silence of the J&K troops as a sign of weakness they went in for the assault. The Fateh Shivs were on the other hand itching for a fight to be able to wreak revenge for what they had suffered at Domicl in 1947. Within fifteen minutes of the bitter hand to hand fighting that followed the Pakistanis found things ~~that followed, the Pakistanis found~~ too hot and disengaging themselves made a hasty and some what undignified retreat, leaving behind eight dead bodies.

The Pakistanies having fired first the Fateh Shivs were now free to go on to the offensive and as a first step they decided to improve their tactical position by evicting the Pakistanis from the bund and occupying it themselves. However, no move forward by the 'Bela' companies was possible till the enemy light machine gun nest on the nose of the bund was destroyed and its devastating fire cut away. Consequently Lance Naik Sunder Singh of 'C' company, who was ~~already~~ known for his bravery and courage, was selected to destroy the machine gun nest and pave the way for the attack on the bund. Sunder Singh did not betray the trust reposed in him and in an astounding feet of individual stalking over bullet swept area, he was not only able to silence the gun by killing all the crew with hand granades, but was also able to pull it out of its nest and ~~but also to~~ carry it back to his position along with two bren magazine boxes containing fourteen bren gun magazines. This done, the 'B' and 'C' companies charged the enemy positions on the bund, and after dislodging him from there, occupied it themselves. The Pakistanis launched a fierce counter ~~attack~~ attack but this was beaten back by the Fateh Shiva with equal ferocity; inflicting innumerable casualties on the attackers who fled in great disorder. Many

Pakistani soldiers, including those not directly involved in this fighting, were burnt to death when the elephant grass on their side caught fire as a result of firing. The fire was fanned by a gentle breeze that blew towards the enemy to engulf the entire Pakistani camp.

The Pakistanis, having been severly mauled in the fighting, now sued for peace. Consequently a cease fire was arranged which was to take effect from 2 a.m. on 19th March. It was agreed that Major General Azam Khan GOC 10th Pakistan Infantry Division and Major General Gurbaksh Singh GOC East Punjab Area would meet at the joint check post at 11 a.m. on the 19th to discuss the terms of the cease fire. Pakistanis, however, played foul once again and in attempt to seize the right Bund before the meeting, they started forming up for the attack. Hell was then let loose on them by our 4.2 inch and 3 inch mortars. The enemy was so plastered at the forming up place that he gave up the attempt before crossing thex start line. A fresh cease fire was nowx agreed upon to coincide with the time of the start of the meeting betwen the two commanders.

The fighting at Hussainiwala had lasted nearly fourteen hours and the Pakistanis are estimated to have suffered some five hundred casualties at the hands of the 4th J&K Infantry. Over ninty dead bodies which lay near our forward positions were and handed over to Pakistan after the cease fire. Some revenge this. The price that the Battalion had to pay for this was 4 killed (Naik Baldev Singh and Sepoys Surajan Singh, Faqir Chand and Dharam Singh) and 24 wounded.

Besides Sunder Singh ~~and Naik Mukhtiar Singh~~, who were awarded Ashok Chakra Class I for ~~their~~ this dare devillery, Naik Parshotam Singh and sepoy Pritam Singh were decorated with Sena Medal each while ~~sepoy Janak Singh earned Ashok Chakra Class II to add to the Battalion's~~ NK Mukhtiar Singh and Sepoy Janak Singh earned Ashok Chakra Class II and Ashok Chakra class III respectively to add to the already impressive tally of field honours and awards.

The Battalion also had the honour of capturing one light machine gun one Sten machine carbine and six rifles to give further credence to this saga of valour and renown. Lieut Colonel Vakil received a well deserved Commendation Card from the Chief of the Army Staff for this action of his Battalion.

INTEGRATION

In the meantime the political situation in the State had vastly changed. The Indian Government in 1953 had at last seen through Sheikh Abdullah's game of trying to keep the State independent of both India and Pakistan. He had, therefore, been dismissed and arrested on 9 August. It is a pity that it took so long for the Government of India to realise that they were being led up the garden path. Sheikh Abdullah's ambition of converting the State into a sort of a sheikhdom with himself as its head could in fact be traced back to the start of his political career in 1931. He had been forced into India's lap because of the Pakistani invasion of the State. Thereafter the Sheikh had taken advantage of the Indian Government's eagerness to meet the wishes of the people of Kashmir to the maximum possible extent, by making his personal wishes look synonymous with the wishes of the people and was in a way able to secure a great amount of independence for the State to fulfil personal ambitions. The State had thus been allowed to have its own constitution, own flag and own law, free of the jurisdiction of the Indian Supreme Court. To make his independence complete he persuaded the Indian Government into exiling the Maharaja from the State even though it stood committed to ~~after giving him assurances that~~ treating him in the same manner as other rulers of Princely States in India. The Sheikh was allowed to retain the designation of Prime Minister of Kashmir as against Chief Ministers of other States and after the removal of the Maharaja his son Yuvraj Karan Singh was made the Sadar-i-Ryasat and not the Governor. Building up his position thus the Sheikh by 1953 considered his position strong

enough to openly adcocate independence as a solution to the Kashmir Issue. Pt Jawahar Lal Nehru who had lent such unbridled support to the Sheikh as a matter of faith and trust much against the advice of some of his senior colleguas must have been the most shocked man on witnessing his friends some result. Never-the-less he gave his consent, even though regrettingly, to the dismissal and arrest of Sheikh Abdullah on 9 August 1953. This came as an anticlimax to the drama that was being enacted by the Sheikh. There was some trouble in the valley but not as much as had been expected. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, who took over the new Prime Minister, was soon able to take firm control of the situation and the matter ended there. With the removal of Sheikh Abdullah, was set into motion a process of gradual integration of the State with the Indian Union. By taking a firm line the Indian Government helped in lessening the uncertainty about the State's future; at least with regard to the liberated portion.

The international situation also now moved in favour of India. In 1953 Pakistan openly joined the American camp by permitting the use of her air base near Peshawar to Amrican planes spying over Russia in lieue of substantial, arms aid free of cost. This brought the Soviet Union closer to India and she openly declared for India in the Indo-Pak dispute over Kashmir. In 1955 Bulganin the Soviet Prime Minister and Khrushchev the First Secretary of the Communist party of Russia stated, rather categorically, that Kashmir was an intergral part of India; the question having already been decided by the people of Kashmir in favour of India. The Russian support was not just moral. Russia being a permanent member of the Security Council, having the power of Veto, her support enabled India to extricate herself from the quagmire in which she had landed herself by referring the Kashmir question to the United Nations, which was

dominated by the Anglo-American block. In fact the Soviet Union used her veto power in 1957 to prevent the security council from forcing an unfair solution of India.

The situation both national as well as international being what it was, much of the uncertainty regarding Kashmir had been removed. It was now quite clear that plebiscite was out, and that the Cease Fire Line would permanently divide the State (defacto if not dejure) into portions under India and Pakistan. An indication to this effect was given by the Indian Prime Minister in a press conference in April 1956. In October that year the Kashmir Constituent Assembly an elected body, finally ratified the State's accession to the Indian Union. India was now under no moral obligation to make any further reference to the people. A stage was, therefore, set for the integration of the J&K State Force with the Indian Army. Happily the situation coincided with the gallant action fought by the 4th Battalion at Hussainiwala which was bound to influence the authorities, both civil as well as military, while they were making up their minds regarding the future of the State Force. The other influencing factor was the praise-worthy performance of the State units in the J&K operations and General K S Thimayya, DSO who had witnessed this performances (as General Officer Commanding 19 Indian Infantry Division) being at the helm of affairs as the Chief of the Army Staff at the time of the integration. It is also possible that consideration was taken of the fact that J&K army was a sizeable force and any large scale disbandment might cause an unemployment problem and consequently disaffection. It is doubtful if the glorious past cast of the State Army came into play, as not many in the Indian Army and perhaps none in the Indian Government are likely to have known any thing about it; most of it being unrecorded at that time. Be it as it may, the J&K State Force received a preferential treatment in this regard vis-a-vis forces of other states.

The normal procedure adopted for the integration of the Indian State Forces with the Indian Army was that certain selected units were transferred to the Indian Army and absorbed into the corresponding arms, corps and services, while the rest were disbanded. Infantry battalions so transferred became part of existing Indian Army regiments and thus lost their identity, except that after integration the name of the State to which they originally belonged was suffixed to the new disignation of each battalion. All the State Force Commissioned Officers were put through screening tests and only a selected few were given regular commission and absorbed in the Indian Army. A deviation from this procedure was, however, made in the case of J&K and all the units of State Force and its officers were absorbed into the Indian army without an exception. The six infantry battalions that had survived the disbandment on-slaught of 1951 were now made into the J&K Regiment of the Indian army with the J&K Training battalion functioning as Regimental Training Centre while the battalions of the new regiment continued to serve at various stations all over India. The Regimental Centre was moved to Morar Cantt Gwalior in 1958. Headquarters Jammu Brigade and Headquarter Kashmir Brigade became headquarters 104 Infantry Brigade (Jammu) and the Headquarters 93 Infantry Brigade (Kashmir) of the Indian Army while the Signal element was absorbed as the 168 Infantry Brigade Signal Section (Kashmir) and 268 Infantry Brigade Signal Section (Kashmir). Other units to be absorbed as such were the Ist J&K Mountain Battery redesignated as the 76 (J&K) mountain Battery the J&K Pioneer Company as the Ist (Kashmir) Independent Pioneer Company. The J&K Records Office, Brass Band moved to the Training Centre while the workshop element was organised into two Light Aid Detatchments Type I, being allotted one each to 168 and 268 Infantry Brigades.[89] Meanwhile the Indian Army had decided in

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89. D K Palit pp 263-264.

Maj Gen (Hony) Dr Karan Singh, on visit to forward areas

May be removed.

Maj Gen Gover Dhan Singh Jamwal AVSM
First State Commission Officer to rise to the rank of Maj General in Indian Army

favour of maintaining only one Horse Cavalry on its strength. This unit, the 61st Cavalry had already been raised in the early 50's from the disbanded elements of Horsed Cavalries of other states, under the command of Lt Col Phulel Singh of the J&K Body Guard Cavalry. Consequently the J&K Body Guard Cavalry, which was located at Gwalior at that time, had to be disbanded at the time of the integration in 1957. All its personnel were, however, absorbed enblock to raise the 60 Heavy Artillery Regiment. Much of its equipment was utilised in making up deficiencies in the 61st Cavalry while its animals were distributed among the various animal transport units of the Indian Army. The only units of the J&K State Force that lost their identity in the process of integration were the J&K Medical Corps, Veterinary Corps, the Animal Transport Company and the J&K Mechanical Transport.[90]

The newly formed Jammu and Kashmir Regiment (ultimately designated as the Jammu and Kashmir Rifles in 1963) took precedence as the Junior most regiment of the Indian Infantry but senior to the regiments of the Gorkha Rifles. The integration of the J&K Infantry with the Indian Army opened the way for Indian Commissioned Officers to be posted to the Regiment and the first batch of young officers joined in December 1957. In 1960 Major General K S Katoch MC who as a Lieutenant Colonel was loaned to the State in 1947 to act as a Military Advisor to the Maharaja, was appointed Colonel of the Regiment and in 1962 when an honorary rank of Major General was conferred on Dr. Karan Singh, son of late Maharaja Hari Singh,

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90. Interview Colonel Phulel Singh and Lt Col Rajinder Singh Katoch. with the author at Jammu 1985

he was appointed the Honorary Colonel of the Regiment. By 1962 most State Commissioned officers had retired on crossing the maximum age limit, causing a big deficiency in the middle order officer cadre. Consequently a number of officers, in the rank of Major and senior Captains, drawn from other regiments of the Army was selected for transfer to the J&K Rifles. The postings were made through an Army Order forbidding representations against transfers. Lieut General Sri Giri AVSM, Major General Amarjit Singh, Major General R K Sood, the present Colonel of the Regiment, and Brigadier Tarlochan Singh are some of the luminaries who entered the Regiment as a result of this order. Though of little significance, it may be mentioned here that the author was also transferred to the Regiment under similar circumstances.

With the end of this Chapter we come to the close of the glorious history of the armed forces of the Dogra Maharajas of Jammu and Kashmir, which were to become the fore runners of an illustrious Regiment of the Indian Army. Since the conversion the Regiment has grown in size from the six battalions that were grouped under it to the nineteen that it has today. Since then it has grown in stature no less. True to its motto, Prashastha Ranvirta, which it has carried since its days as a State Force, it has added appreciably to its fame and glory in battle in the three wars that were thrust upon the country. How this was achieved forms the subject matter for the second volume of the Regimental history.

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APPENDIA 'A'

FORTS UNDER THE JAMMU RAJAS 1842 *

	Name	Tps	Guns	Bambooks
1.	Ian garh	70	2	-
2.	Gulab garh	50	1	-
3.	Kottu	40	-	1
4.	Poonch	25	-	1
5.	Old and new Lumani forts	50	2	5
6.	Naushehra	200	10	-
7.	Bhimber	35	-	1
8.	Saydabad	50	-	1
9.	Rajauri	150	1	-
10.	Ihuthu (name not clear)	50	-	2
11.	Bahram Gulla	55	-	1
12.	Nanshanta	25	-	2
13.	Arnas	50	1	-
14.	Riasi-I	25	1	-
15.	Kishtwar	25	1	-
16.	Bhaderwah	12	-	2
17.	Akhnoor	25	-	4
18.	(Name not clear)	25	-	-
19.	Sherdehri	50	2	-
20.	Attulgarh	40	1	-
21.	Barigarh	15	1	-
22.	Bahu	100	4	-
23.	Riasi-II	80	2	-
24.	Munawar	40	1	-
25.	Mastgarh	60	1	4
26.	Surmurgarh	25	2	-
27.	Ala	40	1	-

28.	Minthoro (name not clear)	25	1	-
29.	Ikhlaspur	25	-	-
30.	Amargarh	45	1	-
31.	Kumarud (?)	15	-	1
32.	Kotli	15	-	4
33.	Bisohli	25	-	2
34.	Khasroul	25	-	1
35.	Jasrotra	200	2	-
	TOTAL:	1787	38	32

* National Archives New Delhi Foreign Secret 941 of 26 Dec 1846

APPENDIX 'B'

REVISED AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE MAHARAJA OF KASHMIR AND REPRESENTATIVE OF THE VICEROY OF INDIA WITH REGARD TO EMPLOYMENT OF STATE TROOPS OUTSIDE THE STATE

Whereas His Highness Major-General Sir Pratap Singh, G.C.S.I., Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir State, maintains a force of Imperial Service Troops for the purpose of co-operating, if need be, in the defence of the British Empire ;

and,

Whereas it is necessary that the Imperial Service Troops of the Jammu & Kashmir State, when associated with troops of the British Army, should be under the orders of the Officer Commanding the combined Forces, and subject to the like discipline and control as the officers and soldiers of Her Majesty's Indian Army;

and,

Whereas it is not the wish or intention of the Government of India that a British Officer should be appointed to command any corps of Imperial Service Troops, though British Officers are employed in order to instruct and inspect the said troops ;

It is hereby agreed between the Governor-General of India of the one part and his Highness Major-General Sir Pratap Singh, G.C.S.I., Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir State, of the other, as follows, namely : -

1. Whenever the said Troops of any portion thereof are moved beyond the frontier of the said State, they shall be attached to the command and under the orders of the Officer Commanding the District, Contingent or Force, in which they are employed; and such officer shall; by virtue of this Agreement, be authorised to administer in respect to the said Troops, so serving, the Military laws and regulations to which they are subject under the laws of the said

State, and for that purpose and for the due preservation of discipline among the same, to convene all such Courts, and to issue all such orders and to pass all such judgements and sentences, and generally to exercise all such authority as may be lawfully convened, issued, passed and exercised by the authorities of the Jammu and Kashmir State, when the said Troops are serving within the territorial limits of the said State; ~~when the said State;~~ provided always that the execution of every sentence, so passed in British territory shall be carried out under the orders of His Highness the Maharaja or of some person to whom the requisite authority has been delegated by him.

2. In order, further, to ensure the efficiency of the said Imperial Service Troops, and the maintenance of discipline among them when serving along with Her Majesty's Forces, the said Major-General Sir Pratap Singh, G.C.S.I., the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir State, has embodied in the disciplinary law of his State, applicable to the said Imperial Service Troops when employed on active service either within or without British India, the provisions, (mutatis mutandis) of the Indian articles of war for the time being in force. The due application and enforcement of the said provisions, in respect of the Imperial Service Troops aforesaid, shall be carried out under the authority of the Officer Commanding the District, Contingent or Force aforesaid.

Sd. Pratap Singh,
Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir State.
12-9-99

Sd. A.C. Talbot,
Resident in Kashmir

Approved and confirmed by the Government of India
By Order
Sd. H.S. Barnes,
Secretary to the Govt. of India Foreign Deptt.

Simla.
The 7th May 1901

APPENDIX 'C'

WAR TROPHIES (1914-19)

1. **Ist Kashmir Mountain Battery**
   12 Rifles

2. **Ist Kashmir Infantry (Raghupratap)**
   Two heavy Turkish Machine guns

3. **2nd Kashmir Rifles (Body Guard)**

   One German Eagle
   One German Flag
   One Machine gun
   12 Rifles of sorts
   One sword with scabbard

4. **3rd Kashmir Rifles (Raghunath)**

   13 German Rifles
   one Machine gun
   one sword with scabbard.

APPENDIX 'D'

LIST OF FORTS IN J & K

A. (Maintained by the Forts Dept one time of the other but abandoned before 1936)

1. Salal (Riasi)
2. Danti
3. Gulabgarh (Rajauri)
4. Ramnagar
5. Jhaganoon (Udhampur)
6. Ramban
7. Mangla Mai
8. Darhal (Kotli)
9. Ramkot (Mirpur)
10. Amargarh (Bhimber)
11. Bhimgarh (Riasi)
12. Dhani Dhar (Rajauri)
13. Chat Patli (Rajauri)
14. Ramgarh (Rajauri)
15. Kishtwar
66. Paddar
17. Kuleeth
18. Then (Basohli)
19. Bula Chak or Devigarh fort
20. Arnia
21. Jaura
22. Panjgarm
23. Mohargarh (Samba)
24. Padhar or Ranbirgarh (Bhimber)
25. Khmba (Bhimber)
26. Doda

27. Samba
28. Ramgarh (Samba)
29. Akhnoor
30. Odtan Pans (Kotli)
31. Athrah (Kotli)
32. Lakhanpur
33. Jasmergarh
34. Zanskar (Kargil)
35. Karnah
36. Nilama
37. Donna
38. Mehendi (Skardu)
39. Burj Keran
40. Stak in Skardu Leh
41. Khaltse in Ladakh
42. Kargil

B. Forts maintained by Miltary funds and garrisoned right upto April 1937

	Jammu Province	Kashmir Province
1.	Ramnagar	1. Leh
2.	Akhnoor	2. Suru
3.	Tharochi	3. Muzaffarabad
4.	Bahu	4. Hari Parbat
5.	Salal	5. Skardu
6.	Mangla Mai	6. Shardaji
7.	Gajpat Garh	
8.	Kapurgarh	

C. Brief Historical Note on some of the Important Forts

BAHU FORT

Bahu Fort on the left bank of river Tawi about two miles from Jammu city was built by one Mian Kishore Singh during the reign of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. After the death of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh and the murder of Raja Dhayan Singh by the Sikhs, the latter invaded Jammu State and attacked Jammu City in 1844. The artillery fire from the Bahu Fort proved to be a decisive factor in preventing the Sikhs from sacking Jammu City. The fort contains temples of Shri Kalka Ji and Narsingji. Fairs are held regularly and pilgrims come from all over the State (and outside) to offer their prayers to Kalka Devi.

The fort had little military value in view of changed military methods of warfare even in 1937 when the report on it was written. However in times of civil disturbance its occupation could still have been useful as a symbol of authority. Otherwise the fort was used for firing gun salutes on all ceremonial occasion. By firing a gun at dawn and 12 noon daily the fortsmen (18 in all) acted as the Jammu people's time keepers. In times when watches were few, time was reckoned in Jammu mainly with reference to the gun fire which could be heard at in villages at long distances. The people responded by saying "Jai Durge" each time the gun fired. Political prisoners were also at times accomodated in this fort.

Today, it is more a place of worship than a fort of any consequences. The faith of the people in the Goddess that resides in the fort is tremendous and most people believe that in 1965 war inspite of Pakistani frantic efforts to destroy it, the Tawi Bridge was saved by the power of the Goddess.

MANGLA MAI

The fort situated on the border of Mirpur and Jehlum districts, is of ancient origin and no record of the time of its construction

exists. The existing fort was built by Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1847 on the banks of River Jehlum about two miles from where the upper Jehlum canal takes off from the river. It was a fine fort in the old style with seven towers. Its value lay in the protection that it afforded to the canal head. Its protection and occupation was included in the States internal security scheme at the instance of the Punjab Government. Gun salutes were sometimes fired on State occasions. Its importance was mostly relegious because of the temple located inside it.

THAROCHI FORT

Built on the left bank of the Poonch river 8 miles to the south of Kotli by the Mongrals Muslims under one Nasir-Din Khan. The fort fell to the Sikhs during the regim of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. In 1855 it passed into the possession of Maharaja Gulab Singh when he defeated Raja Jawahar Singh. Gulab Singh rebuilt the fort in stone. In 1937 it was garrisoned by a det of 8 rank and file of fort guards.

SALAL FORT

Built with mud and brick in 1851 some 8 miles north of Riasi in order to house a garrison located there to maintain law and order.

SHARDA JEE

The Sharda Ji fort was built in 1851 on the bank of river Kr Krishen Ganga after the conquest of Chilas to check raids of Yagistanis. The fort was capable of holding a garrison of 100 men. The fort was came in very handy for locating the headquarters of troops employed on anti Kuth smuggling operations in the area.

The fort contained "Sharda Ji Ka Kund" in which an octagnal idol was kept and the temple of 'Amrit Kund' where sick persons bathed and are reported to get cured. In 1937 it was garrisoned by

15 rank and file of Fort Guards.

LEH FORT

This fort located on an important highway from the Russia-Chinese-Turkistan into India was built in S 1898 (1841 A.D.) by General Dewan Hari Chand after he had suppressed a rising in Ladakh after ~~Zorawar Singh was killed at Man Talab.~~ the death of Zorawar Singh in Tibet It was considered important from military point of view even in 1937 and was garrisoned by 9 rank and file of fort guards.

HARI PARBAT

Hari Parbat (God's mountain) is a hill over looking Srinagar. It was enclosed by a wall in reigns of Akbar and Jehangir. Later Sardar Atta Mohammad built a fort on the hill. In 1846 after the battle of Maisuma between the Dogras and Sheikh Imam-ud-din, Wazir Ratnu gained possession of the fort and held it against all attacks till relieved by Maharaja Gulab Singh. It acted as a symbole of Dogra authority not only in Srinagar but the whole of Kashmir. Gun salutes were fired on State occasions. In 1937 it was garrisoned by 25 rank and file of the Fort Guards.

MUZAFFARABAD FORT

Originally built in mud by the Afghans, it was rebuilt in stone by Maharaja Gulab Singh on the river Krishen Ganga near its junction with Jehlum at Domel. Garrison was withdrawn in 1927 (16 July).

SKARDU FORT

The Skardu fort is situated on a hill over looking the town of Skardu. Originally it was the headquarters of the Rajas of Skardu. When this hill track was conquered by Wazir Zorawar Singh the fort itself defied all efforts of the ~~invaders~~ Dogras to capture

it because of its naturally very strong location (and it was only) treachery on the part of its defenders (who) betrayed it into their (Dogra) hands. The fort was then razed to the ground. Reconstruction of the present fort was commenced in 1857 under orders of Maharaja Ranbir Singh and under the supervision of Mehta Mangal and completed in 1884. The (R)iver Indus runs round the three sides of the hill on which the fort stands. On the Eastern side of the fort the following (C)inscriptions (in Persian) are to be found engraved on a stone :-

" With the help and Grace of Almighty this fort has been built on earth under the command of His Majaraja Ranbir Singh Sahib Bahadur, the like of whom has never been known before. He is the master of extensive dominions comprising the territory of Jammu, Kashmir, Tibet, Ladakh and Gilgit. Under the able guidance of his Prime Minister Dewan Anant Ram, the second aristotle on earth, the Maharajas dominions enjoy unrivalled greatness. The Maharaja has at his command the services of another able minister named Shiv Saran who is unrivalled in wisdom. Mehta Mangal (resident of Kishtwar) is the Governor of Tibet who is not excelled in wisdom. He has built this iron fort on a peak situated on sky-kissing mountains. The construction of the fort was commenced in Year S 1914* ".

In 1937 was garrisoned by 10 rank and file of Fort Guards.

SORU FORT

Built in S ~~1890~~ 1891-92 ~~on the bank of Sangdom~~ by General Zorawar Singh who advanced into the 'illaqua' of Kargil from Kishtwar. Soru was conquered first and the fort was built as a means for controlling that territory.

AKNOOR FORT

Built by Thakur Teg Singh about 1762 or so. Its position on the right bank of Chenab is most picturesque. This fort also

* The Bikrami Samvat is 57 years ahead of the Christian era. Year S 1914, therefore, corresponds to 1857 AD

contains a temple of Goddess Kalka Ji. It is of historical value on account of the Raj Tilak of then Raja Gulab Singh having been performed in this fort by none other than Ma-haraja Ranjeet Singh.

GAJPAT FORT

Gajpat Garh fort was built by the chiefs of Kishtwar. It is almost surrounded by River Chenab. The fort was captured by Maharaja Gulab Singh. At one time political prisoners and criminals sentenced to transportation for life were lodged in this fort.

RAMNAGAR FORT

This fort was built by Bandral Rajas of Ramnagar in 1816-1823. It was besieged several times by the rebelions Thakurs of the Rajas and once by Raja Mari Chander Dev of Rupar but was never captured until 1851 when Maharaja Gulab Singh sent Dhani Raghubir and Goverdhan Regiments against it. The Thakurs, Raja Bandral and Raja Mari Chander Dev were defeated and the control of the fort passed into the hands of the J&K Government.

Based on Jammu Archives mil Block G-308/1957
file no 87/0/94-95

APPENDIX 'E'

ITINERY OF MARCH

I **Jammu to Srinagar (15 days including two days rest enroute)**

Jammu

Nagrota

Tikri

Udhampur

Dhauntal

Batote

Ramban

Ramsu

Naugam

Munda

Qaziqund

Khanabal

Avantipura

Srinagar

II **Bandipur to Gilgit (17 days including 4 days rest enroute)**

Bandipur

Tragbal - Misri Bukh-Kalalot-Dila-Baraj-Niat-Chilas (6 days)

Kurgbal

Churwan- Kamri- Kalapani-Shankargarh-Rattu (4 days)

Peshwari
Burzil
Chillum
Gudai
Astore
Dashkin
Doaim
Bunji
Pari

Gilgit- Sherote- Gakuch- Gupis (4 days)

APPENDIX 'F'

OFFICERS COMMANDING UNITS
BEFORE FORMATION OF IMPERIAL SERVICE CORPS *

Raghupratap		Ragunath	
Jemadar Than Singh	1856	@ Comedan Anant Singh	1857
Subedar Mian Jalla	1860	Comedan Labha	1865
Comedan Baj Singh	1873	Major Nathu	1869
Comedan Sunder Singh	1879	Comedan Pheroo	1882
Comedan Bejai Singh	1885	Comedan Jagat Singh	1889

Body Guard

Jemadar Kanhiya	1868
Comedan Sookhu	1869
Colonel Devi Singh	1870
Comedan Dwarka Nath	1871
Comedan Saikhla	1872
Comedan Chattar Singh	1873
Comedan Wazir Devi Dass	1877
Comedan Safa Chand	1878
Comedan Bejai Singh	1879
Comedan Sunder Singh	1893

* Based on information contained in Jammu Archives Mil Block B-17 Adjutant General's Office file No Nil of 1902. Evidently the information has been collected by the units by interviewing old soldiers. As the information given out by these personnel has been from memory the dates shown against each Commandant cannot be very accurate. However there is no reason for us to doubt the names of the commandants and the date of raising of each of the three units, the events being too important to be mistaken. In any case in absence of any other authentic information on the subject, this may be accepted.

@ Dogri version of commandant. Also spelt Kumedan

APPENDIX 'G'

IMPORTANT APPOINTMENTS 1893-1957 *

Commander-in-Chief

Raja Ram Singh	1885 to 1899
Raja Amar Singh	1899 to 1909
Raja Hari Singh	1909 to 1925
Maharaja Hari Singh	1925 to 1949

1. Military Secretary

Lt Col Chamberlain	1893-1897

2. Military Advisor

Captain E T Gastrell	1897-1917
Lt Col J L Rose	1910-1917
Brig J L Rose	1917-1920
Major R D Alexander	1920-1925

3. Chief of ~~Army~~ Military Staff

Lt Col R D Alexander	1925-1927
Colonel R M Anderson	1927-1930
Brig R O Sutherland DSO	1930-1933
Brig D B Edward	1933-1936
Brig M L Scot CB, DSO, MC, PSC	1936-1945
Brig Rajindra Singh	Sep 47- Oct 47
Brig Khuda Baksh	1948-1949
Col R Sarin IA	1949

General Staff Officer

Col Rahmat Ullah Khan	1927
Col Baldev Singh Pathania	3
Lt Col Rajindra Singh	1934
Lt Col Onkar Singh	1938
Col Rajendra Singh	1940
Brig Ghansar Singh	1942-47
Brig Krishna Singh	1948

Adjutant General

Col Dwarka Nath	1893
Col Nihal Singh	1895
Col Farman Ali Khan	1899
Col Samunder Khan	1909
Gen Samunder Khan	1913
Gen Farman Ali Khan	1916
Lt Col Durga Singh	1920

Quarter Master General

Colonel Devi Din	1893
Colonel Sohnu	1895
Col Bhag Singh	1902
Lt Col Anant Ram	1909
Colonel Anant Ram	1913
Col Biswa Nath	1921
Colonel Sher Ali	1923

Adjutant & Quarter Master General

Col Sher Ali	1925
Col Onkar Singh	1926
Col Lachman Singh	1931
Lt Col Bakshi Chand	1934
Lt Col Udai Chand Bakshi	1939
Lt Col Zahur Hussain	1943
Lt Col Adalat Khan	1947
Lt Col Abdul Aziz	Oct 1947-49

* Based on J&K Army Lists that were published regularly from 1893 to 1949.

Formation Commanders

No 1 I.S.T. Brigade (Gilgit)

Gen Suram Chand	1890
Gen Baj Singh	1893
Gen Jagat Singh	1895
Gen Suram Chand	1896
Gen Bijay Singh	1901
Gen Sohanu	1902
Gen Makhan	1905
Gen Farman Ali	1909
Gen Sammunder Khan	1916

No 2 I.S.T. Brigade (Jammu)

Gen Baj Singh	1890
Gen Suram Chand	1893
Gen Jagat Singh	1895
Gen Nihal Singh	1899
Gen Khajoor Singh	1944

Jammu Brigade/Area

Gen Shankar Singh	1893
Gen Bhagwan Singh	1910
Col Gandip Singh	1921
Col Sher Ali	1922
Col Onkar Singh	1923
Col Sarup Singh	1924
Col Onkar Singh	1925
Col Ram Singh	1926
Brig Harnam Singh	1931
Brig Ghansar Singh	1932
Brig Thakur Rahmat Ullah Khan	1934
Brig Ghansar Singh	1938
Brig Rajendra Singh	1942
Brig Udai Chand	1946
Brig Khuda Baksh	1947
Brig N S Rawat	1947
Lt Col Bhagwan Singh	1948
Brig N S Rawat	1949

Kashmir Brigade/Area

Gen Punjab Singh	1893
Gen Bijai Singh	1895
Gen Kharak Bahadur	1901
Gen Bhag Singh	1909
Col Gandharab Singh	1921
Col Porakh Singh	1922
Col Sansar Singh	1923
Col Onkar Singh	1924
Col Sansar Singh	1925
Col Parsid Singh	1930
Brig Onkar Singh	1931
Brig Thakur Rahmat Ullah Khan	1932
Brig Ghansar Singh	1934
Brig Rahmat Ullah Kham	1938
Brig Udai Chand	1943
Brig Rajendra Singh	1946
Brig Faqir Singh	1947
Brig Krishma Singh	1948

Gilgit Area

Col Sobha Singh	1921
Col Gandharab Singh	1922
Col Sarup Singh	1923
Col Sansar Singh	1924
Abolished wef	1925

APPENDIX 'H'

OFFICERW COMMANDING UNITS

1893-1957

A. CAVALRY

Kashmir Lancers

Comdt Alla Dad Khan	1893
Ris Maj Sumeet Singh	1897
Lt Col Sumeet Singh	1906
Ris Maj Prakash Singh	1911

Kashmir Body Guard Cavalry

	1893
Comdt Nawab Khan	1910
Major Bharat Singh	1915
Major Alif Khan	1920
Lt Col Alif Khan	

J & K Body Guard Calalry

Major Prakash Singh	1921
Major Nasib Singh	1922
Lt Col Hira Singh	1923
Lt Col Nasib Singh	1930
Lt Col Balwan Singh	1932
Lt Col Krishna Singh	1939
Lt Col Devi Singh	1942
Lt Col Faqir Singh	1943
Lt Col Sher Singh	1947

B. ARTILLERY

Ist Battery

Comdt Gazara Singh	1893
Comdt Khajoor Singh	1893
Maj Amant Singh	1902
Maj Balwan Singh	1907
Maj Dharam Singh	1914
Maj Atta Mohd Khan	1918
Maj Khushal Khan	1921
Maj Rajour Singh	1925
Maj Sher Bazkhan	1929
Maj Bhagwan Singh	1940
Maj Amar Nath	1942

2nd Battery

Comdt Jamait Singh	1893
Maj Atta Mohd Khan	1909
Maj Daya Ram	1918
Lt Col Sarup Singh	1921
Maj Narsing Singh	1923
Maj Faqir Ullah	1928
Maj Bhagwan Singh	1936
Maj Ali Ahmed Shah	1940

3rd Battery

Capt Nimmat Singh	1921
Maj Nimmat Singh	1925
Maj Raghunath Singh	1931
Maj Derak Ram	1932

Commander Artillery

Lt Col Nimmat Singh	1930
Lt Col Faqir Ullah	1937

Artillery Training Centre

Lt Col Sher Baz Khan	1940
Lt Col Bhagwan Singh	1942

C. INFANTRY

Raghupratap

Comdt Bijai Singh	1893
Comdt Lochan Singh	1895
Comdt Phula	1896
Lt Col Samunder Khan	1901
Lt Col Gauri Nandan	1911
Lt Col Ishari Singh	1912
Lt Col Parkash Singh (Poratah)	1921
Lt Col Samsar Singh	1922
Lt Col Chattar Singh	1923
Lt Col Devi Singh	1924
Lt Col Ghansar Singh	1932(June)
Lt Col Jaswant Singh	1932(Sept)
Lt Col Sukh Ram	1937
Lt Col Omkar Singh	1940
Lt Col Bhagwan Singh	1943
Lt Col Krishna Singh	1945
Lt Col Hira Nand	1947-48
Lt Col Khajoor Singh	1948-49

Body Guard

Comdt Sunder Singh	1893
Comdt Makhan	1895
Maj Budhi Singh	1906
Lt Col Raghubir Singh	1907
Lt Col Haider Ali Khan	1914
Lt Col Hakim Khan	1917
Lt Col Sher Ali Khan	1917-21
Lt Col Lachman Singh	1921-2
~~Lt Col Hakim Khan~~	~~1922~~
Lt Col Abdul Rahim Khan	1930
Lt Col Lal Khan	1932
Lt Col Pir Mohd Khan	1937
Lt Col Khuda Baksh	1939
Lt Col Abdul Hamid Khan	
~~Lt Col Ishar Dass~~	~~1949~~

Raghunath

Col Jagat Singh	1893
Comdt Bhagwan Singh	1895
Lt Col Khajoor Singh	1910
Lt Col Durga Singh Baz	1913
Lt Col Hakim Khan	1921
Lt Col Man Bir	1925
Lt Col Baikunth Singh	1927
Lt Col Ajaib Singh	1930
Lt Col Ram Lal	1939
Lt Col Krishma Singh	1943
Lt Col Chattar Singh	1945
Lt Col Puran Singh Thapa	1947
Lt Col Jahar Das	1949

Fateh Shivji

Col Atama Singh	1893
Comdt Sunder Singh	1895
Comdt Farman Ali Khan	1898
Lt Col Rang Khan	1900
Lt Col Qudrat Ullah	1910
Lt Col Sobha Singh	1919
Maj Chattar Singh	1921
Lt Col Parsid Singh	1923
Lt Col Baldev Singh Pathania	1927
Lt Col Ali Akbar Khan	1932 (Jan)
Lt Col Sukh Ram	1932 (May)
Lt Col N S Rawat	1940
Lt Col Narain Singh Samyal	1941 (Dec)
Lt Col Prakash Chand	1944-47
	1947

Ram Ranbir

Col Muncer Shah	1893
Col Farman Ali Kh.	1895
Disbanded in	1898

Ramgole

Col Nihal Singh	1893
Col Bhag Singh	1895
Lt Col Tulsi Ram	1898
Dishbanded	1907

Raghubir

Col Sohnu	1893
Col Phula	1895
Comdt Ram Singh	1896
Dishanded	1907

Suraj Gorkha		Ruder Shivnabh	
Col Kharak Bahadur	1893	Col Baisakha Singh	1893
Lt Col Amar Bahadur	1901	Lt Col Nazara Singh	1902
Lt Col Gandip Singh	1915	Lt Col Gandharab Singh	1905
Maj Baldev Singh	1921	Lt Col Govind Singh	1909
Maj Devi Singh	1923	Lt Col Ishari Singh	1912
Lt Col Devi Singh	1924	Lt Col Gauri Nandan	1912
Lt Col Parsid Singh	1927	Disbanded in	1921
Lt Col Joginder Singh	1930	Reraised in	1940
Lt Col Milka Singh	1932	Lt Col Dhananter Singh	1940
Lt Col Dhananter Singh	1932	Lt Col Krishna Singh	1942
Lt Col Ram Lal	1936	Lt Col Ram Lal	1943
Lt Col Derak Ram	1939	Lt Col Hira Nand	1948
Lt Col Kripal Singh	1943		

6th J & K Infantry

Maj Abdur Rehman Afridi	1924
Lt Col Abdur Rehman Afridi	1925
Lt Col Harnam Singh	1926
Lt Col Baikunth Singh	1930
Lt Col Ali Bahadur	1932
Vacant	1935
Lt Col Omkar Singh	1936
Lt Col Rajendra Singh	1938
Lt Col Ali Akbar Khan	1940
Lt Col Abdul Majid Khan	1942
Lt Col Murrawat Khan	1948

7th J & K Infantry

Lt Col Bakshi Chand	1932
Vacant	1935
Lt Col Udai Chand	1936
Lt Col Chattar Singh	1939
Disbanded in July	1946
Reraised in March	1947
Lt Col Devi Singh	1947
Lt Col Puran Singh Samyal	1948

8th J & K Infantry

Lt Col Jaswant Singh	1940
Lt Col Faqir Singh	1941
Lt Col Maluk Singh	1947

Training Centre

As Infantry Depot.

Major Gauri Nandan	1907
Major Gandip Singh	1908
Major Porakh Singh	1913
Vacant	1917

As No 4 Training Battalion

Major Rahmat Ullah Khan	1921
Major Karan Bir Singh	1922

As J & K Training Battalion

Major Dhanatar Singh	Jan	1932
Major Pir Mohd Khan	Sep	1932
Lt Col Khuda Baksh		1937
Lt Col Faqir Singh		1939
Major Chhaju Singh		1941
Lt Col Bhagwan Singh	July	1942
Lt Col Kripal Singh	Nov	1942
Lt Col Derak Ram		1943
Lt Col Krishna Singh		1944
Lt Col Abdul Aziz		1946
Lt Col Zabur Hussain		1947
Lt col Prakash chand		1950
Lt col Sher Singh		1951
Lt col Ishar Dass		1954
Lt Col Didhagh Rai		1956.

APPENDIX 'J'

SUBEDAR MAJORS

A. Cavalry

Dharam Singh	1932
Allah Dad Shah	1936
Balwant Singh	1941
Pritam Singh	1943
Ker Singh	1948

B. Infantry

Raghupratap		Body Guard		Raghunath	
Triloku	1932	Tek Bahadur	1932	Zaman Singh	1932
Mohan Singh	1937	Niaz Mohd Khan	1935	Lachman Das	1936
Chanchal Singh	1941	Syed Hussain Shah	1942	Hira Singh	1940
Suram Singh	1943	Moti Lal	1948	Jhamru Singh	1942
Solachan Singh	1946			Fagir Singh	1946

Fateh Shivji		Suraj Gorkha		6th J & K Infantry	
Tahmasab Khan	1942	Narad Singh	1932	Farman Ali	1932
Nur Shah	1942	Shankar Singh	1935	Barita Chib	1940
Murtwat Hassain	1946	Mansa Ram	1940	Roshan Khan	1946
Prab Dyal Singh	1947	Bhikam Singh	1946		

7th J & K Infantry		8th J&K Infantry		9th J&K Infantry	
Charan Singh	1932	Tripat Singh	1940	Ganga Singh	1940
Pratap Singh	1936	Sumit Singh	1942	Swaru Sukrant Singh	1942
Bhuri Singh	1940	Chamel Singh	1945		
		Hari Singh	1948		

J & K Training Battalion

Joginder Nath	1942
Samdhur Singh	1944

APPENDIX 'K'

HONOURS AND AWARDS *
(Pre Independence)

1. Knight Commander of the Most Exalted Order of the Indian Empire (KCIE)

General Raja Sir Hari Singh

2. Companion of the Most Exalted Order of the Indian Empire (CIE)

Major General Raja Farman Ali Khan, Sardar Bahadur
Lt Col Haider Ali Khan, Sardar Bahadur

3. Order of the British Empire (OBE)

Brig Ghansar Singh Rao Bdr OBI	1945
Lt Col Khuda Baksh (2 KR)	1946
Lt Col Narain Singn (4 KI)	1946

4. Medal of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

Lt Col Adalat Khan	1946

5. Military Cross (MC)

Captain Madan Lal (IKMB)	1941
Captain Mohd Aslam Khan (4 KI)	1944
Lieut Banaras Dev (4 KI)	1944
Captain Harnam Singh (4 KI)	1944
Captain Hassan Khan	1944
Jem Mohd Niwaz Khan	1944

6. Military Medal (MM)

L/Hav Nek Alam (4 KI)	1945
L/NK Nag Singh (4 KI)	1945
L/NK Mohammad Din (4 KI)	1944
L/NK Noor Alam (4 KI)	1944
NK Chatru (4 KI)	1945
L/NK Balak Ram (4 KI)	1945
L/NK Parmadand (4 KI)	1945
Sep Mohmmad Shafi (4 KI)	1945
Sept Bhulla Ram (4KI)	1945

7. Order of British India (OBI) First Class with the title "Sardar Bahadur".

Lt Col Sunit Singh	28.3.1908
Maj Gen Nihal Singh	2.1.1911
Maj Gen Farman Ali Khan	12.2.1911
Maj Gen Khajoor Singh	"
Lt Col Haider Ali Khan	28.4.1917
Maj Dharma Singh	28.7.1917
Maj Gen Samunder Khan	5.6.1920
Col Durga Singh	1.1.1921
Lt Col Hira Singh	- - 1922
Brig Rahmat Ullah Khan	1.1.1939
Sub Major Nur Shah	1.1.1946

* Compiled from J&K Army Lists from 1893 to 1946

8. Order of British India 2nd Class with the title "Bahadur" *

Maj Gen Bhagwan Singh	1903	Col Hoshiar Singh	1924
Lt Col Balwan Singh	1918	Col Sarup Singh	1928
Lt Col Durga Dutt Mahey (Asstt Surgeon)	1917	Maj Bishen Singh	1926
Subedar Mohammad Din	1917	Brig Ghansar Singh	1935
Lt Col Atta Mohmand Khan	1920	Col Balwan Singh	1939
Maj Prakash Singh	1920	Lt Col Ali Akbar Khan	1940
Col Gandharab Singh	1920	Sub Maj Syed Massain Shah	1944
Lt Col Ishar Singh	1920	Sub Ghulam Rasool	1944
Col Jamak Singh	1920	Sub Baldev Singh	1945
Lt Col Onkar Singh	1920	Sub Feroz Khan	1944

9. Indian Order of Merit (IOM) Ist Class

Lt Col Durga Singh	1915

10. Indian Order of Merit 2nd Class

Sub Sarup Singh	1917	IKMB
Jemadar Khushal Khan	1917	IKMB
Sub Randhir Singh	1915	2 KR
Sep Bal Bahadur Chetri	1915	"
Sep Dal Bahadur	1915	"
L/NK Devi Singh	1916	3 KR
Sep Hafiz Ali	1916	2 KR
Sep Sarbam	1918	1 KI
Hav Atta Ullah Khan	1917	2 KR
L/Hav Manbir	1917	3 KR
NK Rahim Ali	1917	2 KR
NK Dal Bahadur Thapa	1915	3 KR

11. Indian Order of Merit 3rd Class

Sep Sunder Khatri	1891	2 KR
Sep Nagda	"	"
Sep Mangbir	1893	"
Sep Labha	1895	3 KR
Hav Danya	"	"
Major Bhagwan Singh	"	"
Jemadar Jitman	"	"
Subedar Gandip Singh	"	"
Sep Niku	"	"
Hav Dharam Singh	"	1 KMB
Hav Balwan Singh	"	"

* ~~Compiled from~~ J & K Army Lists from 1893 to 1946

12. Indian Distinguished Service Medal (IDSM)

L/Nk Indru	1916	3 KR	Sep Bhagwan Singh	1915	2 KR
Jemadar Bom Bahadur	1916	"	Sep Ganga Ram	"	3 KR
L/NK Devi Singh	1916	"	NK Kamal Singh	1918	1 KMB
Hav Markabir	"	"	Sub Shib Ram	1919	5 KR(P)
Jemadar Nazara Singh	1918	KBGC	Hav Koran	1919	1 KR
Dafadar Dost Mohd Khan	"	"	Sep Ram Mast	"	"
Sub Mardan Ali	1915	2 KR	Sep Devi Singh	1915	3 KR
Sep Billu	"	"	Maj Bishen Singh	1916	7 KI
Sep Saif Ali	"	"	L/NK Gabla Singh	1941	1 KMB
Hav Madho	"	"	NK Rehmat Ali	1944	4 KI

13. Indian Meritorious Service Medal (IMSM)

Vet Asst Ganga Singh	1918	1 KMB	Hav Kharku Khanzi	1920	2 KMB
Capt Himmat Singh	1918	3 KMB	NK Raghunath Singh	"	Arty Depot
Tpt Hav Lakhu Ram	"	1 KMB	Lieut Ali Akbar	1918	2 KR
Jemadar Bagh Ali	1918	"	Hav Teju	"	"
Hav Musahib Ali	"	"	Sep Mohd Akram	"	"
Hav Maj Sant Ram	"	"	Jem Anant Narain	1920	"
Lieut Sher Baz Khan	1920	3KMB	Hav Brita	"	"
Hav Maj Dharam Singh	"	1 KMB	Hav Shama	"	"
Hav Beli Ram	"	"	Hav Sardula	"	"
Hav Yaqub Shah	"	"	NK Manjit	"	"
Hav Mohammad Din	"	"	NK Dilla Ram	"	"
Hav Rawi Singh	"	"	VetAsst Mohd Hussain	"	2KMB
Jem Muzaffar Khan	"	"	L/Hav Gyan Singh	"	3 KR
Hav Moti Ram	"	2KMB	Vet Asst Mohd Hussain	"	2KMB
L/NK Feroz Khan Din	"	"	Sawar Basant Singh	"	KL
Hav Dal Bahadur	1918	3KR	Maj Ali Akbar Khan	1918	4 KI
NK Karnbir	"	"	Jem Barita Chib	1920	6 KI
Sept Shib Ram	"	"			
Hav Angrez Singh	1920	"			
Hav Chunu	1920	"			
Hav Tulbir	"	"			
Hony Jem Karam Chand	1917	KL			
Sep Dal Bahadur	1920	3 KR			

14. Foreigh Awards

Lt Col Haider Ali Khan	-	3rd Class Order of St Stanislaus 1916
~~Sep Hafiz Ali (2 KR)~~	-	with sword (Russian)
Sep Hafiz Ali (2 KR)	—	Russian Medal Order of St.George 1916
Sep Rehman Ali (2 KR)	-	-do- "
Lt Col Sansar Singh	-	Croix-de-Gurre (French) 1917
Captain Balu (2 KR)	-	Medaglia di bronze al Valor Militare al (Italian)
Sep Dal Bahadur (2KR)	-	Medalle Militare (French) 1917
Sep Jawahir Singh (3 KR)	-	Medaglia di bronze al Valor Militare al 1917

HONOURS AND AWARDS *
(Post Independence)

1. Maha Vir Chakra (MVC)*

Brig Rajendra Singh (Chief of ~~Army~~ Military Staff)		1947
Lt Col Sher Jang Thapa	6th J & K Inf.	1948

2. Vir Chakra (Vr C)*

Subedar Ram Saran Das	8 J&K Inf	24 Oct	1947
Jemadar Sardha Ram	1 J&K Inf	17 Jan	1948
Lt Col Hira Nand Dubey	1 J&K Inf	01 Jan	1948
NK Budhi Singh	1 J&K Inf	17 Jan	1948
Sep Nil Kanth	1 J&K Inf	17 Jan	1948
L/NK Janak Singh	9 J&K Inf	8 Feb	1948
Lieut Ajit Singh	6 J & K Inf	30 March	1948
Jemadar Piar Singh	6 J&K Inf	30 March	1948
L/NK Santam	9 J & K Inf	17 April	1948
Subedar Kanshi ~~Ram~~ Singh	9 J & K Inf	17 April	1948
L/NK Dhani Ram	5 J & K Inf	23 May	1948
Sep Jagat Singh	5 J & K Inf	23 May	1948
Sep Bua Ditta	8 J & K Inf	16 July	1948
Subedar Krishan Singh	8 J & K Inf	16 July	1948
L/NK Dharub Singh	1 J & K Inf	27 August	1948
Sep Sant Ram	1 J & K Inf	27 August	1948
Subedar Parwin Singh	6 J & K Inf	22 Sept	1948
Capt Risal Singh	1 KMB	14/15 Nov	1948
Capt Jagdish Singh	9 J & K Inf	20 Nov	1948

* Based on the Encyclopaedia of Soldiers with Highest Galantry Awards by the City House Journals and Eucyclopaedias N-74 Greater Kailash New Delhi-110048

HONOURS AND AWARDS

(Post Independence)

3. **Ashok Chakra Cl I**

L/NK Sunder Singh	4 K I	1956
~~NK Mukhtiar Singh~~	~~4 K I~~	~~1956~~

4. **Sena Medal**

NK Parshotam Singh	4 KI	1956
Sep Pritam Singh	4 KI	1956

5. **Ashok Chakra Cl II**

NK Mukhtiar Singh ~~Sep Janak Singh~~	4 KI	1956

6. Ashok Chakra Cl III

Sep Janak Singh	4 KI	1956

APPENDIX 'L'

LIST OF ARMS AND EQUIPMENT DEMANDED FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA FOR MEETING THE PAKISTANI THREAT IN OCTOBER 1947

LIST OF EQUIPMENT REQUIRED FOR IMMEDIATE OPERATIONAL NEEDS IN CONNECTION WITH INTERNAL SECURITY JAMMU & KASHMIR STATE

1. EQUIPMENT FOR TWO 4-Gun (3.7" How) MTN. BATTERIES, complete to equipment Table Scales:-

   i) 8 Guns (3.7 How), Carriages and wheels (preferably pneumatic), Pack saddlery plus directional and control instruments- directors, range-finders, binoculers, compasses, W/T Sets No. 18 and 22 and connected signalling equipment.

   ii) 4 Bren Guns with AA. Mountings.

   iii) AMMUNITION- 6,000 H.E. (Shells)

   iv) WORKSHOP SETS- Tools Fitters and Artificers, complete to equipment table scales.

2. FIGHTER PLANES :-

   i) 2 Fighter Machines (complete with equipment).
   ii) Pilots amd Personnel to man the above.
   iii) AMMUNITION- 100,000 rds S.A.A. (Ball).
   iv) Anti-personnel Bombs 9 to be dropped from the air), 10000.
   v) Flares- 1000

3. DAKOTA-

   i) 1 Dakota Plane for supply dropping.
   ii) Personnel to man the above.

4. ANTI-AIRCRAFTS GUNS -

   i) 8 Anti-Aircraft Guns, complete with spare components.
   ii) 2000 rds for the above.

5. VEHICLES for Motorised-cum-Pack Battery-

   i) Jeeps ---------- 4 ------ 4
   ii) F.A. Tractors or 15 CWT Trucks 6
   iii) 15 CWT Trucks ---------- 4
   iv) 3 Tonners ----------10

6. W/T SETS

   i) 18 or 48 Sets..... 72. Dry Batteries to fit..... 648
   ii) 38 or 78 Sets..... 75. Dry Batteries to fit..... 405

7. Demolition Material- Masonry work.

Sd/- Brigadier,
CHIEF OF THE STAFF,
J & K State Forces.

APPENDIX 'M'

A. THE MOTTO

PRASHASTA RANVIRTA

B. B. THE CREST

1931 onwards

upto 1920

C. BATTLE AND THEATRE HONOURS

LADAKH 1834-40 BALTISTAN 1940 TIBET 1841

GILGIT 1860 YASIN 1863 DAREL 1866

HUNZA_NAGAR 1891 (Raghupratap, and Body Guard)

CHILAS 1893 (Body Guard)

CHITRAL 1895 (Raghunath)

KILMANJARO, BEHO BEHO, EAST AFRICA (Body Guard, Raghunath)

MEGIDO, NABLUS (Raghupratap)

SHARON (Raghunath)

PALESTINE 1918 (Raghupratap, Rathunath)

3rd AFGHAN WAR 1919-20

KENNEDY PEAK MEIKTILA (Fateh Shivji)

POONCH 1947-48 (Ist, 8th and 9th J&K Infantry)

SKARDU (6 J&K Infantry)

J&K OPERATIONS 1947-48

APPENDIX N

UNIFORMS*

I. ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF STATEMENT OF MAJOR GUSAON (EX RAMGOLE BATTALION) WITH REGARD TO UNIFORM WORN BY STATE TROOPS BEFORE FORMATION OF KASHMIR IMPERIAL SERVICE CORPS

" I fully well remember the uniform of that time. In the begining (1849) Ram Gole was issued with an ordinary coat which was red in colour which hardly reached below the belly and it was studded with metalic buttons and a yellow ribbon was laced in front and the pantloon was of black colour. The turban was blood red and underneath was worn a yellow 'pug'. This was issued free to the troops. The troops had the following weapon issued by government. A match lock fitted with flint stone and every soldier had his own private sword.

"Every soldier was issued with a belt and a cross belt of web of black colour. Right from Jemadar upto Kumedan was issued a coat mit with a superior golden lace. Upto Subedar the shoulders were worn on one side while all others upto Kumedan had them on both side. The weapons right from sepoy to Kumedan were of the same pattern.

"For summer, right from Subedar upto Kumedan the dress was a coat of 'Latha' and a pant also of 'Latha' and a turban of red colour with a yellow 'pug' underneath was worn. But the officers had the 'pugree' infringed with white kimara. This uniform was worn at the time of some occasion. During rest of the time they all had to wear their private garments ie white shirt, white pyjama and white turban. This uniform remained in vogue till Chilas was conquerred (1851). Later it was changed".

Signed Major Gusaon (1901)

(Translated from Urdu by Shri Prem Singh Salathia, Tehsildar)

II EXTRACTS FROM HISTORY SHEETS OF SOME UNITS IN RESPECT OF THEIR UNIFORMS

(a) 2nd Kashmir Mountain Battery

Uniform in 1868 was of black colour with red colar.

(b) Raghunath Battalion

1857 - Fuldress red. Brass cap
Summer uniform white coat, blue pantaloon.

(c) Raghupratap Battalion

1853 (Boys Company) white 'Kurta' black pantaloon.
1858 to 1873 Red uniform with red turban
1874 to 1876 - Red uniform with helmet
1877 to 1889 - Red uniform with yellow facing.
Turban white and red.

(d) Body Guard Battalion

1869 - Uniform red-facing yellow. Turban red and yellow

1871 - uniform crimson- facing blue- turban red and yellow

(*Information based on Jammu Archive Mil block 'B'- 17 of 1902)

APPENDIX 'O'

DAIRY OF EVENTS

1815 Raising of a company of 200 soldiers by Raja Gulab Singh on being granted Jagirs of Lala Chanbra and Ramgarh.

1820 Raja Kishore Singh and his sons (Gulab Singh, Dhyan Singh and Suchet Singh) obliged to maintain 400 Sawars for service of the Lahore Durbar on grant of Jammu Jagir to them.

1822 Small regular army of horse and foot soldiers raised after Gulab Singh was created the Raja of Jammu.

1824 Reduction of the Samarath Fort by Raja Gulab Singh.

1827 A platoon of infantry raised by Dhayan Singh on behalf of the Lahore Durbar on being created the Raja of Poonch.

1834-36 Conquest of Ladakh by the Dogra army under General Zorawar Singh- Raising of the Fateh Shivji Battalion.

1837 Rebellion in Poonch

1839-40 Dogra invasion of Baltistan

1841 Dogra invasion of Western Tibet. Death of Zorawar Singh

1842 The Sino-Tibetan invasion of Ladakh- Ladakh lost and reconquered- Rebellion in Baltistan crushed.

1845. The Sikh invasion of Jammu

1846 The creation of the Jammu and Kashmir State

1848 Invasion of Gilgit by Ganhar Rehman- Gilgit lost and regained.

1849 Second invasion of Gilgit by Ganhar Rehman- Gilgit lost and regaind.
Jammu troops in support of the British against Sikh insurgents.
Raising of the Shri Suraj Gorkha Regiments.

1850 Campaign against Chilas.

1852 Gilgit invaded and occupied by Ganhar Rehman

1853 Raising of Mian Sahib's company of Boys (unarmed)

1856 Gilgit recaptured by the Dogras

1857	Jammu army contingent in support of the British during the Indian Mutiny.
	Gilgit lost to Ganhar Rehman for the fourth time.
	Raising of Bijli Topkhana
	Raising of the Raghunath Battalion.
1858	Mian Sahib's Company converted into a fulfledged company of 150 uniformed and armed men- the fore runners of the Raghpratap Battalion of the State Force.
	Raising of the Ruder Shivnabh Battalion
1860	Gilgit finally recaptured
1863	Campaign against Yasin
1866	Invasion of Gilgit by Iman-ul-Mulk of Chitral- Driven out by the Dogras
1868	Raising of "Lambardar ke Puttar" unit.- The fore runner of the 2nd J&K Rifles
	Raising of a Body Guard Battery- The forerunner of the 2nd J&K Mountain Battery.
	Participation of State troops in the British Black Mountain expedition.
1869	"Lambardar ke Puttar" converted into a regular infantry battalion and designated at the Body Guard Battalion.
1872	Official raising of the Body Guard Mountain Battery
1877	Introduction of Enfield and Snider rifles in the infantry and 7 pounder guns in the State Mountain batteries.
	Formation of regiments and columns.
1879-80	Token participation of the Dogras in the 2nd Afghan War.
1888	A contingent of two regiments under General Inder Singh for the third British Black Mountain Expedition.
1890-91	Formation of the Kashmir Imperial Service Corps.
1891	Hunza Nagar Campaign
1893	Rebellion in Chilas
1895	Chitral Campaign
1896	3rd Ram Ranbir disbanded
	6th Raghubir disbanded
	The British Miltary Secretary replaced by a British Military Advisor.
1897	Ist Kashmir Mountain Battery for the British Tirah Expedition.
1899	Rationalisation of ranks- Lieut Colonels and Majors

1901	Representation in the Common Wealth of Australia Celebrations at Sydney.
1901-02	Token participation in the Boer War.
1902-03	Lee Matford rifles introduced in infantry. 2.5" RML guns for the State artillery. Participation in the Delhi Durbar and military Manoeuvres preceeding the Durbar.
1904	Visit of the Prince of Wales.
1906	Establishment of the Cadet School
1907	5th Rangole disbanded- remaining IS Battalions reorganised with 9 companies in each. 4th Raghunath re-numbered as the 3rd Raghunath.
1911-12	Promotion examinations for officers introduced.
1914	Deparature 2nd Battalion and half of the 3rd for East Africa as part of British Expeditionary Force 'B'
1916	Deparature Ist Kashmir Mountain Battery for East Africa.
1917	Return of 2nd and 3rd Battalion from Africa Raising of 2/2 Kashmir Rifles
1918	Deparature Ist Raghunath as part of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force Deparature 3rd Battalion for Palestine. Return Ist Kashmir Battery to State from Africa and its move to NWFP for garrison duties.
1919	Return of Ist and 3rd Battalions and Ist Battery to State at the end of the Great War. Ist Battery remobilised and proceeded for service in East Persia.
1920	Return of the Ist Battalion and Battery to State at the end of the Afghan War.
1921-22	Abolition of Generals rank- Colonel Commandants created Creation of ranks of Lieutenants and Captains. Disbandment of Sappers and Miners . Disbandment of 2/2 Kashmir Rifles and raising of the Training Battalion. The "Imperial Service" classification of troops dispenced with. General revision of pay and allowances.
1922-23	The entire army brought on class 'A' establishment Training Battalion disbanded and Training School raised in its place. Ruder Shivnabh disbanded. Fateh Shivji and Suraj Gorkh redisignated as the 4th Pioneer and 5th Light Infantry respectively. Raising of the 6th Pioneers Battalion. The 3rd Battery raised and all the three batteries designated as Kashmir Pack Batteries. The Regimental transport of all units transferred to the Kashmir Military Transport. Appointment of the Chief of Army Staff (British Officer) in place of Military Advisor.

1925	Maharaja Hari Singh comes to the throne Setting up of Army Council Post of General Staff Officer (GSO) created at AHQ with Directors Directors- Military Training, Musketry, Signalling and Physical training under him. Appointment of Adjutant General merged with that of Quarter Master General to form Adjutant and Quarter Master General (AQ) with Director Lands and Transport under him. Colonel Commandant Gilgit Area abolished. Class composition of each unit fixed permanently.
1926	Opening ceremony of Badami Bagh Cantonment Srinagar.
1928	Anti Kuth smuggling operations commenced as a regular feature each year.
1929	A civil post of Army Minister created and Military Board (as the Army Council was re-designated) abolished. Aid to Civil authority during serious floods in Srinagar.
1930	Raising of a squadron of cavalry as the Palace Guards.
1931-32	Aid to civil authority in connection with serious disturbance created by the Muslim Conference in Kashmir and Jammu.
1932	Raising of the 7th Battalion Raising of the Training Battalion Rank of Subedar Major introduced
1935	Lease of Gilgit to the British for 60 years. Withdrawal of State troops therefrom. Redisignation of units of the State army as "Jammu and Kashmir" Units as against "Kashmir" units earlier. One section of mechanical transport added to the J&K Military Transport. Organisation of a Manoeuvre Area around Naeshera.
1936	3rd Battery disbanded. J&K Artillery Training Centre raised.
1939	Out break of World War II Departure Ist Battery for Scunderabad
1940	Move 2nd J&K Rifles (Body Guard) to NWFP Move 4th J&K Inf (Fateh Shivji) to NWFP Move 2nd J&K Mtn Battery to NWFP Raising of the 8th and 9th Battalions Ist J&K Battery sails for the Middle East
1941	Move 7th J&K Infantry to NWFP
1942	Daparature 9th J&K Infantry for NWFP Ist and 2nd J&K Mountain Batteries transferred to the Indian Army.

NOTES

1. Major General HL Scott, notes written after his retirement and sent to Lt Col PN Kak, supplemented by notes by Brigadier Krishna Singh.
2. Brigadier Krishna Singh, notes. All notes of the Brigadier were found to have been based primarily on official documents.
3 Ibid.
4. Notes, Maj Gen HL Scott.
5. Notes, Brigadier Krishna Singh.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. L- ±
12 gadier Krishna Singh, notes.
13. Vl Mahajan, INDIA SINCE 1926, S Chand & Co Delhi, 1969, pp 406-410.
14. Muhammad Yusuf Saraf, Kashmiris Fight for Freedom, P. 678.
14. Brigadier Krishna Singh, notes.
15. ML Saxena, TRAGEDY OF KASHMIR, pp. 455-456.
16. Muhammad Yusuf Saraf, KASHMIRIS RIGHT FOR FREEDOM, p. 678.
17. Brigadier Krishna Singh, notes.
18. Ibid.
19. HL Saxena p. 472.
20. Ibid., p. 477.
21. Brigadier Krishna Singh, notes.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Brigadier Krishna Singh, notes.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. Brigadier Krishna Singh, notes.
31. Ibid.
32. Muhammad Yusuf Saraf. p. 707.
33. Brigadier Ghansar Singh, Memoirs, p. 25 and Interview with the author at Jammu 1985.
Alan Campbell-Johnson, Mission with Mountbatten, Robert Hale Ltd London, 1951, pp. 120-122.
34. Major General HL Scott, notes.
35. Allan Camphell-Jhonson, p. 289.
Durga Das, Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50 vol 1, Navjivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1971. pp. 34-3.
36. Based on Memoris of Brigadier Ghansar Singh pp. 16-43.
37. Durga Das. p. 37.
41Hbid..p 40.
42. Ibid., p. 130. There are strong indications to show that the name of justice Mahajan was proposed by Sardar Patel himself.
43. HL Saxena, pp. 492-493.
44. Brigadier Krishna Singh, notes.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.
51. Brigadier Krishna Singh, notes.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
56. Draft Regimental History Jammu & Kashmir Rifles produced by the Regimental Centre-1965, pp. 182-183.
57. Ibid.
58. Maj Gen HL Scott, notes.
59. Brigadier NS Rawat, notes.
60. Maj Gen HL Scott, notes.
Lt Col Bhagwan Singh, Political Conspiracies of Kashmir, Light & Life Publishers, Rohtak, 1973, p. 53.
61. Brigadier Ghansar Singh, Memoirs pp. 23-24.

63. Major General HL Scott, notes.
64. Draft Reglmenud History Jammu& Kashmir Rifles, p. 222.
65. Lt Col Puran Singh Sambyal, notes.
66. Draft Regiment History Jammu&Kashmir Rifles, p. 184.
67. Ibid., pp. 184-185.
68. Ibid., pp. 186.
69. Brigadier Chattar Singh, notes.
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid.
72. Ibid.
73. Ibid.
74. Major Ram Prakash's account of the siege of Kodl.
75. Draft Regimental History, p. 202.
76. Draft Regimental History, p. 188.
77. Mehr Chand Mahajan, Looking Back, Bombay, 1963.
78. Draft Regimental History, pp. 218-219.
79. Brigadier NSRawat, notes.
80. Based on Draft Regimental History, pp. 221-229.
81. Durga Das, p. 50.
82. Ibid., pp. 45-47.
83. Ibid., pp. 54-55.
84. Ibid., p. 63,HLSaxena,p.49l-93.
85. Based on Draft Regimental History, pp. 229-236 as supplemented by account of the action compiled by Lt Cot SS Pathania from interviews with the survivors of Brigadier Rajinder Singh's little force and further interrogation of Lt Col Nasft) Singh, Major Prabhat Singh and Lt Col Puran Singh Sambyal (at that time GS02 at Jammu & Kashmir) by the author at Jammu in 1984.
86. Mehr Chand Mahajan, Looking Back.
87. Sardar Patel Correspondence, pp. 61-63.
88. Lt Col Bhagwan Singh, Political Conspiracies of Kashmir, Light & Life Publishers, Rohtak, p. 89.
89. Lt General LP Sen, Slender was the Thread (Kashmir Confrontation 1947-48) Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1969. pp. 46-48.
90. Ibid., pp. 52-53.
91. Based on an account written by Lieut Labh Singh soon after the operations, and Draft Regimental History, pp. 237-247.
92. Brigadier Chattar Singh, notes,
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.

1944 2nd Body Guard moves overseas to Iran
4th Fateh Shivji moves to the Burma front for active operations against the Japanese.

1945 7th Infantry disbanded while in the NWFP
The 2nd and the 4th Battalions return to the State at the end of the War.

1946 Insurgency in the Mirpur-Poonch area.
Raising of a Brigade headquarters at Jhangar (No3 op Brigade).

1947 Take over of Gilgit from the British (1 August)
Raising of a Brigade headquarters at Poonch (1 October)
Pakistani invasion of the Kashmir Valley (22 October)
Heroic action of Brigadier Rajindra Singh and his small band of Dogras in delaying the enemy (22 to 26 October)
State's accession to the Indian Union (26 October)
Arrival of the first Indian Army unit at Srinagar (27 Oct.)
Fall of Gilgit (01 November)
Uri-Poonch link-up by land (20 November)
Evacuation of Kotli (26 November)
Fall of Mirpur (26 November)
Mirpur Brigade wound up (November 1947)

1948 Reraising of Ist J&K Mountain Battery (January)
Skardu reinforced by State Troops (February)
Fall of Skardu (14 August)
Poonch Rajauri link up (20 November)
Capture of Budil (26 November)

1949 Cease Fire (01 January)

1951 Disbandment of the 5th, 6th and 8th Battalion

1952 Jammu Brigade moved to Poonch (April)

1953 State Force battalion move to various stations in India for a tenure of service outside the State.

1956 Indo-Pak clash over the Hussain-i-Wala headworks- Fateh Shivji settles scores.

1957 Amalgamation of the State Force with the Indian Army and formation of the Jammu and Kashmir Regiment.

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